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ABSTRACT

This monograph is composed of papers from the first National Conference on School Recognition Programs. School recognition programs vary considerably, but they do acknowledge schools that perform well (winners) and have recognizable public relations value. Consequently, school recognition programs have substantial potential for educational improvement. Papers include: (1) "Introduction: School Recognition Programs--From Fad to Institution?" (E. A. Wynne); (2) "Characteristics of an Ideal Recognition Program" (E. A. Wynne); (3) "Five Recognition Programs" (D. J. Peterson); (4) "Technical Issues in Designing and Implementing School Recognition Programs" (G. K. Mandeville and L. W. Anderson); (5) "Criteria of Success in School Recognition Programs" (B. Rowan); and (6) "School Recognition Programs: Controlling or Empowering?" (T. Astuto). The five programs described by D. J. Peterson include: the National Elementary School Recognition Program and the National Secondary School Recognition Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education; the California School Recognition Program sponsored by the California State Department of Education; the South Carolina School Incentive Reward Program sponsored by the South Carolina State Department of Education; the Quality Instruction Incentives Program sponsored by the Dade County (Florida) Public Schools and the United Teachers of Dade; and the For Character School Recognition Program sponsored by the University of Illinois (Chicago). (SLD)

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DESIGNATING WINNERS: USING EVALUATION IN SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Edited by
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CSE Report No. 279

Center for the Study of Evaluation
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INTRODUCTION

SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS--FROM FAD TO INSTITUTION?

Within the past seven years, the idea of school recognition programs has moved from the status of a novel proposal, to sporadic experimentation, through birth as a possibly transitory fad, and has now apparently reached the stage of institutionalization. The next potential step is the level of widespread diffusion. Of course, there is no assurance this will occur. The developments, however, in the recent past, reveals that the underlying idea possesses many underrated attractions.

Recent History

One early proposal for the creation of such programs was uttered in 1980. Then, in 1982, the Ford Foundation funded a two-year program to identify conspicuously promising high schools in low-income communities. Following this precedent, in 1983 Secretary Bell announced the commencement of a national/federal program to identify excellent public high schools, and that program has since expanded. Despite the enthusiasm underlying these measures, the Ford program expired, per plan, and the Federal program, which still operates, has not yet established an institutional base via the passage of authorizing legislation. But, since 1984, legislatures in California, South Carolina and Florida have authorized their state education departments to put into operation systems for conspicuously recognizing public schools with noteworthy performance records. Other states are contemplating similar measures.

The nature of these state programs varies considerably. Still, there are important common elements: winners are publicly identified; programs cover both elementary and secondary education; funds are annually appropriated for the management of the programs and for the provision of certain awards; and the state education departments play important roles in the operation of the programs. But the programs also have diverse points of difference: some legislation delegates considerable program authority to local school districts (and even requires employee cooperation in adopting and designing programs); the value of the awards, and the forms of awards distributed, vary widely; and the criteria for earning recognition differ.

In addition to such state-based systems, other structures for providing recognition have developed--for example, one national system maintained by Burger King (aimed more at principals than schools), and another system in the Chicago area sponsored by the University of Illinois at Chicago. A national conference on school recognition programs occurred in late March in Miami.

At a superficial level, it is easy to see why such programs have begun to catch on. They do not require large amounts of funds. They seem upbeat. They have a certain public relations appeal--after all, who should be publicly against recognizing excellent schools? Indeed, schools, by the very nature of their typical instructional programs, with honor rolls and other techniques, are already deeply involved in making distinctions about others' competency. And, unlike merit pay, school recognition programs do not directly attack powerful forces such as teacher unions. Finally, it is no coincidence that the three state programs created so far have appeared in states led by dramatic education innovators, skilled at communication and image-making: Bill

Honig in California, Governor Riley in South Carolina, and a medley of reformers in Florida.

Strengths and Drawbacks

At a more profound organizational level, there are important strengths and drawbacks to such programs, which deserve greater professional recognition. All energetic and ambitious people desire fame--conspicuous public praise. Thus, public systems of recognition are an important, ingenious, and moderate cost way of exercising influence over education. Such systems distribute fame to educators and schools which meet the systems' criteria. Thus, recognition systems have the potential for notably shifting, in the longer run, many educational priorities. This potential is especially significant in public education, where the current systems for distributing recognition (or fame) are relatively diffuse and of problematic legitimacy.

Most educators realize that ambitious and active administrators are usually busily engaged in image-management: in insuring that they are publicly identified with laudable activities associated with their schools and that embarassing news is countered or buried. Such patterns are common among successful administrators in all areas of life--in politics, business, finance and the armed forces. The peculiar challenge in education arises because too many of the publicly "laudable activities" of schools deal with peripheral, or not-too-important matters: having good athletic teams, or elaborate buildings or grounds, or many students attending prestigious colleges--when such attendance is more to the credit of the students' families than their high school. Again, many schools make much ado about their pupil/teacher ratios, even though research discloses little or no relationship between the ranges of

ratio typically found in schools and improved pupil learning. The recognition programs propose that more rigorous and well-conceived criteria be applied in assessment and that the assessment rely on careful information gathering and analysis.

The importance of managing the distribution of fame has been recognized by the initiators of many other well known systems of granting awards. Consider, for example, the Nobel Prizes, the Pulitizer Prizes, the Academy Awards, or the elaborate systems of recognition (for heroism) applied by the armed forces of all modern societies. Some of these systems provide cash awards, as well as conspicuous recognition. It is apparent, however, that much of the impact of the systems in their fields depends on the public prestige associated with recognition--though that prestige may ultimately be translated, by winners, into improvement of their economic status.

My appreciation of the powerful force of such award programs began many years ago, when a friend of mine deeply committed himself to the field of nuclear physics. He was an extremely able person. Still, his dedication required considerable economic sacrifice and enormous professional involvement. There were many ways he could make more money than through pursuing research in physics. But he wanted to eventually win the Nobel Prize. So far, he has not won his prize, but he is still a contender. His commitment demonstrated to me the powerful energies that an important prize system can mobilize. And I am certain that the noteworthy pace of development in many of the physical sciences in our era has been strongly influenced by the existence of such prize systems. They have attracted able people to these fields, and established goals for them to strive toward. Conceptually, there

is no reason why prizes to entities such as whole schools--as well as individuals--should not gradually produce equivalent effects in education.

Challenges Ahead

While recognition programs have shifted from being fads toward institutionalization, many of their major developmental challenges still lie ahead. Sometimes, things become institutionalized and still eventually expire, and sometimes things that are institutionalized evolve destructive policies. The very potential power recognition programs may mobilize is one source of danger. That power may be applied toward wrong ends; the programs may reward bad policies and practices or may be directed towards trivial priorities. Indeed, so far we probably have not had enough serious analysis of the recognition criteria the programs apply. My sense is that the present programs largely involve the application of much off-the-shelf philosophy and technical apparatus. This pattern is understandable. It has enabled the programs to move ahead with relatively few complications--always an important asset in a comparatively novel activity. Such criteria have also allowed the programs to satisfy an important body of potential critics--the educators and schools that have dedicated themselves to satisfying the previous popular professional criteria. However, it will gradually become necessary for the programs to shift their criteria onto a new plane.

The shift should frankly recognize that the programs constitute a new player in the education game, with original capabilities. Those capabilities allow the programs to enlist some additional persons in the process of defining criteria,and to identify criteria which have been comparatively disregarded by the previous informal systems. New or revised criteria will

stimulate the recognition systems to collect different data and subject the data collected to novel forms of analyses. Furthermore, there should gradually be greater intersystem communication among programs, and even intellectual controversy about the merits of different types of criteria and modes of awards. These matters should be examined and debated. Such exchanges will heighten the accountability and, ultimately, the legitimacy of the systems.

For example, so far the Secretary's program has not provided recognition for a single public senior or junior high school in the whole City of Chicago system. There are about 150 such schools. As someone with considerable contact with that system, I do not believe this recognition pattern fairly reflects the true quality of the Chicago educational system. There are some poor public schools in the city, but also some excellent ones--especially considering the extraordinary challenges they face. And a number of suburban schools around the city's rim have attained recognition, as well as some city private schools. I do not know whether any Chicago public schools have chosen to participate and/or if the program's criteria make it unreasonably hard for Chicago public schools to win. In any event, this pattern suggests that the criteria or application process of the Secretary's program deserve, at least, a searching analysis.

The fact that if the programs move toward a new intellectual plane, the evolution will be accompanied by increased controversy should not be surprising. Greek myths inform us that the Trojan War was provoked when Hera, the Godess of Discord, threw an apple, labelled "to the fairest," into a trio of three other godesses. The resulting dispute led to the War. Furthermore,

one does not need to be a cynical Machivellian to imagine that some criteria and award decisions may be affected by more that purely scientific priorities. Still, I am of the camp which contends that education, at the present, suffers from the dominance many poorly analyzed and conflicting goals. From this perspective, recognition programs appear to be a good tool for refining our philosophical discourse--to the benefit of most pupils and practising educators.

The fact that ambitious local educators and political leaders have become interested in the creation and operation of recognition programs will greatly assist the process of improvement. The recently formed systems, or those being born, are taking on lives of their own and will probably develop different emphases and priorities. The matter has attained a certain organic nature. With a little luck, for the rest of our lives, we will see recurring--and perhaps intensifying--controversies about the design and operation of these systems. The effects of such disputes should, on the whole, be very beneficial to education.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AN IDEAL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

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The key aim of school recognition programs should be to encourage educators to improve the effectiveness of the schools in which they work. Recognition programs should not mainly aim to dole out praise, resources, and encouragement to deserving schools--virtuous though such distribution may be. Instead, the objective is to foster change for the better. It is true that, at this time, recognition programs have only limited resources to distribute. Their potential for generating change, however, is considerably greater than the sum of these resources.

If the number of recognition programs or the resources they allocate increase--and I propose they should--their power to foster desirable change will grow. Indeed, it is probable that the modest number of programs now existing is just about the right amount. The number represents a healthy rate of growth but the rate is not so fast as to overextend our capabilities in administration and concept development.

FAME

Recognition programs can be a powerful engines for fostering change because fame and other public rewards are a major means of human motivation. And, in the case of schools, the current systems for distributing such benefits often operate in an inefficient and random fashion. It is true that

many able school administrators dedicate considerable energy to project attractive images for their schools. Generating such images is especially complicated in education, since the visible characteristics of so-called effective schools are hard to define. But images are the outcome of visibility.

Image Management

Despite such visibility problems, ambitious administrators find ways to attract public recognition. They develop winning high school teams. They keep their schools and grounds neat and attractive. They strive to have their graduates accepted by good colleges. If test score results are published they try to have students earn high test scores. They assiduously cultivate the local media, and they energetically strive to suppress bad news.

All of these activities are indirect measures of administrative competence. Most of them have some positive connection with running an objectively good school. However, such activities represent only a moderate fraction of the elements of educational excellence. Indeed, the too-vigorous pursuit of such activities may even lead a school to distort its operations in educationally unsound ways.

Image Management Elsewhere

Problems of image management are not unique to educators. Leaders of all important institutions are concerned with image management and the attainment of recognition and fame. However, in the case of leaders in other systems--in industry, politics, government, and finance--a richer and more profound variety of measures of efficiency are available to voters, customers,

stockholders and other constituencies. Unfortunately, in the case of education, the semi-superficial criteria sketched above are among the best assessment tools usually available.

This barrenness of assessment measures means too many schools and educators will adopt undesirable operating goals. Either they will become excessively concerned with image-management, in the worst sense, or succumb to the temptations of withdrawal. Such schools lead a lotus-like existence and eschew the pursuit of all difficult goals.

Furthermore, irrelevant competition discourages the strong. Many potentially able educators turn away from their profession to work in other environments: environments where there is a more rational relationship between the logical goals of their work and the activities which win them praise or keep them out of trouble. Perhaps this is one way of interpreting the reports of former educators who have left the field for other employment. They miss their contact with children; however, they find their new profit-oriented environments are more wholesome work sites.

Narrow Criteria

Finally, we should realize that the current popular criteria for school efficiency--which I have briefly listed--focus on a restricted pool of schools. Such schools typically exist in peculiarly advantaged situations. This does not mean that no schools in low-income communities can win popular praise. But the contemporary criteria give preponderant weight to policies and programs typical in high-budget schools, serving affluent communities. Such criteria provide few incentives for lower budget schools to strive for

public recognition, nor do they encourage planners to develop moderate-cost ways of providing better quality service to pupils and families.

All of this means that the school recognition movement represents an important force for educational improvement. It can generate revised and more wholesome goals for our schools. Such goals may provide educators with desired recognition plus constructive challenges. The new goals may be especially significant just because, as I emphasized, the current incentive environments around our schools are so barren. Due to this impoverishment, even relatively moderate changes may have disproportionate benefits.

Let us now consider the basic characteristics of an ideal school recognition program. I realize no programs can be created all at once, in an ideal form. Compromises will be necessary. Also, some listeners will undoubtedly differ with important elements of my model. Still, the model can provide an intellectual focus for discussion. It can also set the stage for the presentations occurring throughout this important conference.

PROPORTION AND CATEGORIES OF WINNERS

Awards Cause Discord

It is interesting to recall that the alleged trigger for the Trojan War was the act of Hera, goddess of discord. She threw an apple, labelled "To the fairest," into a group of other goddessses. The resulting disputes and tensions eventually led to the War. The distribution of awards, no matter how well-intentioned, is an activity fraught with tension. Indeed, perhaps the only alternative worse than recognizing merit is maintaining an environment where we are publicly indifferent to it or reward it in a random and

personalistic fashion. But if we deliberately recognize the tensions implicit in the process of recognition, we can temper many of our problems.

An ideal program, over a reasonable period of time, must provide recognition or awards for a relatively large number of effective schools in different circumstances. Conversely, a program which only recognizes a proportionately small number of participating schools will only motivate the few schools which appear to be potential winners. And non-winners will usually spend their time deprecating the program to all concerned.

Many Categories of Winners

The ideal program will create a variety of forms or levels of winners. Not only elementary and secondary, but also large and small schools. There can also be levels of winning--first, second or third place, or semi-finalists and the like. Top level winners might be barred from competing for several years. Schools could additionally be divided according to their proportions of pupils from low income families. Over a period of three or four recognition cycles, perhaps thirty or forty percent of the schools that persistently choose to compete should attain some significant form of recognition.

This matter of distributing recognition serves to distinguish school recognition programs from programs to recognize individual merit--such as teacher recognition programs. Both types of programs have their peculiar virtues. But teacher recognition programs face a special challenge. There are over two million teachers--and less than one hundred thousand schools. No combination of all the teacher award programs now in operation, or proposed,

holds the promise of publicly recognizing more than a minute fraction of all teachers: perhaps no more than one or two percent at best.

Any system of recognition which can only hope to identify a small proportion of participants is setting itself up for trouble. This principle is well known to skilled teachers who plan classroom award systems providing many forms and varied levels of recognition to pupils. Conversely, it is conceptually possible to manage school recognition programs so that substantial proportions of eligible schools win some form of recognition. This does not mean all jealousy and tacit acrimony will be abolished. However, at least the pool of recognized schools can be large enough to serve to countervail program critics.

Voluntary Participation

I should also mention the matter of voluntary or mandatory participation in competition. At this time, voluntary participation is more desirable. We all are familiar with the many school and program accreditation systems now operating. One reason the validity of those programs has decayed is they are mandatory. Because schools must attain certification to stay in operation, an enormous responsibility is placed on certification agencies. That pressure has undermined the rigor of many such well-intentioned agencies. A voluntary program, however--especially if participation and losing are kept confidential--permits a school to excuse its non-winning. It also permits the program to be relatively rigorous, without making too many enemies. Eventually, if recognition programs are conspicuously successful, it will be harder for educators to refuse to compete. But that problem and the opportunity it presents lie ahead.

BENEFITS FROM RECOGNITION

There is already considerable variety among the benefits provided to winning schools in the existing programs. And undoubtedly, other forms of rewards can and will be devised. But the topic can be considered in general terms.

Money, prestige and fame are all forms of rewards. Fame is simply the outcome of a process that makes a person or organization the subject of conspicuous, persisting public praise. Suppose we put up, in some permanent place, a beautiful statue celebrating the importance of education. And then we annually engrave the names of the awarded schools and their faculties on the statue's base (a little like the tradition of the ancient Roman triumphal arch). Such a measure might do as much to motivate people as giving each teacher $100 or $250. Or suppose the winners' names were announced before an audience of 25,000 specially assembled for that purpose? Or if we had the names of the winners announced through being spelled out by skywriting airplanes?

The means I propose are not cheap. They use money and other resources. My point is that, as Shakespeare recognized, fame is a powerful spur to achievement. It may be wiser to use a program's resources to buy honorable and conspicuous recognition for winners, compared to limited increases in their budgets or staff salaries. In any event, here is a wonderful arena for the exercise of imagination and flexibility. The ideal distribution of fame among top and lower level winners is a complex matter. But this is exactly why recognition programs should proceed on an incremental basis and learn by doing and reflecting.

CRITERIA: AN APPROPRIATE SOURCE OF CONTROVERSY

Clear Criteria

If programs are designed to promote change, they must communicate to potential applicants exactly what forms of conduct and policies will earn recognition. They must articulate criteria, and the criteria must be reasonable, precise and clear.

Clarity and precision will invite criticism. People may well choose to object if they lose and can easily see how and why they did not win. But some level of such criticism is much to be desired. In the long run, it will stimulate the refinement of program operation and elevate public discourse about school excellence. I am somewhat troubled that our current recognition programs have proceeded so far without serious public discussion of the criteria they are applying--as if those criteria were delivered like the Ten Commandments. In the end, such continuing anti-intellectualism will severely handicap program development.

Inevitability of Controversy

It is true that almost everybody believes he knows how to identify a good school. But careful listeners quickly discover the definitions applied by such persons--when they are clearly articulated--reflect significant disagreements. Thus, I am sure that most randomly chosen, formally qualified persons will not all designate the same schools as their excellent schools. The many controversies we now see affecting American education--about dropouts, expectations for pupils, the relative importance of discipline and homework, and the appropriate relationships between principals and teachers--

are all evidence of such differences. I realize that many administrators are effective because they can obscure differences among co-workers. But a recognition program is partly supposed to generate wholesome controversy about priorities. It should be clearly saying some things are good and, at least implicitly, that certain other apparently good things are not so good.

Two Examples

Let me be concrete. I interviewed a ghetto high school principal. She spoke lucidly and forcefully about her school's policy of "encouraging" unmotivated pupils who passed the age of required attendance to leave her school, and perhaps to pursue alternative educational programs. She believed this practice increased the efficiency and morale of her staff and the remaining pupils. She hoped most of the pushouts went out into other education programs. Her first priority, however, was to change the environment in her school. Her conduct may have been, arguable, raising the school's dropout rate. Was she running a good school? Or would it have been a better school with a slightly lower dropout rate, with more undermotivated pupils drifting throughout the school (and there are many of such schools)?

Of course, most of us would agree that an ideal high school--even in a low-income community--would have no dropouts and no drifting pupils. However, if there were few or no ideal schools available, I am sure that many informed persons would differ on the weight (whether pro or con) to be given to the principal's pushout policy.

To take another example, my impression from the available data is that about thirty to forty percent of the public schools in America authorize

teachers to apply corporal punishment to pupils under certain circumstances. Can such a school be an excellent school? My speculation is that some of the schools designated as winners in some of the existing programs do authorize teachers to apply corporal punishment. Does this mean such punishment is not inconsistent with educational excellence? If so, it might be useful for that fact to be clearly articulated so that other educators can be informed about that opinion.

MIMICRY: A GOOD THING

To Encourage Mimicry

Clarity and precision are also desirable because they will help persuade all concerned that a program's decision process is not personalistic, and prone to manipulation and favoritism. It will further allow more future participants to see what policies they will have to mimic to try to become winners.

As I emphasized, the first goal of recognition programs is to foster mimicry--to have ordinary schools adopt the policies of more successful schools. But mimicry cannot occur unless the desired practices are spelled out with some precision. Simply recognizing schools because their pupils have relatively good reading scores probably does provide not enough information.

Tensions Between Outcome and Process

Most educators now want their pupils to attain good test scores. Their problem is that they do not know what to do to attain that effect. The

teachers to apply corporal punishment to pupils under certain circumstances. Can such a school be an excellent school? My speculation is that some of the schools designated as winners in some of the existing programs do authorize teachers to apply corporal punishment. Does this mean such punishment is not inconsistent with educational excellence? If so, it might be useful for that fact to be clearly articulated so that other educators can be informed about that opinion.

practices of winning schools should be described--in a timely, clear and conspicuous fashion--so non-winners can understand how to improve. In sum, recognition must walk a fine line between identifying (a) the comparatively good learning outcomes it praises and (b) the processes associated with good outcomes. Too emphatic a focus on outcomes may leave non-winners confused about how to attain desirable goals. Too emphatic a focus on schools having "right" processes may lead us toward the current certification trap. In this trap, schools are largely classified on the basis of whether they have certain programs or bodies of certified staff. There is too little concern for each school's objective efficacy.

LEGITIMACY

Recognition programs must have legitimacy. They must be logically plausible and appear to be fair to the important actors concerned. This does not mean that everyone must be satisfied. That would be the counsel of perfection. Indeed, I have already even proposed that it is time for the programs to be exposed to a little more controversy--which can undermine legitimacy. And so another careful distinction must be drawn.

Being logically plausible means that the philosophic foundation of the program--what it views as virtue--is evident and basically defensible to the audience concerned. Then, a justifiable technology of information collecting and analysis must be applied. It is not coincidental that two of the workshops at this conference are focused on the topics of program criteria and the technology of analysis. The appearance of fairness means program initiators must enlist the help of talented and significant persons in designing and managing the program--so losers cannot easily say the whole thing was rigged.

It is desirable that many persons involved in developing the program have ties with what might be called the education establishment. But the pool of legitimators should extend beyond educators to encompass parents and intellectuals. Otherwise, adaptation and flexibility will be inhibited. It will not be healthy if recognition programs only apply the criteria that existed before the establishment of such programs. After all, the programs have novel capabilities for gathering and analyzing information--so they should cast their nets to collect novel facts.

More effective programs will project an image of longevity to observers; they should not have a transitory character. This will encourage educators to go through the tedious work of revising their priorities to eventually become eligible for an award. One- or two- shot recognition systems will not provide such an incentive. The concept of persistence suggests the need for government sponsorship--since legislation can provide a base for regularity and persistence. However, many important non-governmental award systems have been established and have persisted in America and elsewhere--examples are the Nobel Prizes, the Pulitzer Prizes, and the Academy Awards. There are no reasons why similar systems might not be established for schools. Indeed, at this early stage of development, a variety of forms of recognition should be tested. Non-governmental programs provide one important alternative model.

APPLYING AND BEING EVALUATED

Reasonably Simple Applications

We must consider the exact mechanics of applying and being evaluated. The design of this process faces several hurdles. The application process should not be too cumbersome. Otherwise, it will be based in favor of schools with the resources and time to complete complex applications. People will not be encouraged to run good schools, but to become good at completing applications. The application data should not be too complicated for the program to evaluate. Programs will also be tempted to solely solicit off-the-shelf data from schools, to simplify completing applications. But, in many schools, the quality of such data are low. Thus, the process of evaluation may become very constrained.

Site Visits: Their Purpose

Site visits are often or always used; their purposes, however, must be carefully structured. If not, the legitimacy of the evaluation will be compromised. Losers will feel they lost because they did not hit it off with some visitor, instead of meeting some objective criteria. Or winning may depend too much on the writing skills or reputation of different visitors, compared to the quality of the school.

Let me amplify the topic of site visiting with my personal experience as a visitor. Once, when I made a visit, I mentioned to the principal that I did not find the school's honor roll publicly posted. And having a posted honor roll was one of about fifty criteria prescribed in the program involved. The school had checked "Yes" for that question on the application form. The principal and I toured the halls. Eventually, in a semi-abashed manner he agreed there was not an honor roll. Students received honor roll recognition on their report cards, but nothing was publicly posted. The lack of the roll and other incidental defects caused a well-run school to only make second place. But my site visit judgment was not subjective. I was sent largely to see if the program's relatively objective criteria were being fulfilled, not to apply my philosophy of school management. If the principal felt the honor roll matter was petty, he got upset at the program and not the visitor. And he had to admit the program was straightforward. This is part of what legitimacy means.

Relying on Test Scores

When we mention legitimacy, we should say some things about using pupil test scores as criteria. Interschool comparisons of pupil test score results face significant technical barriers.

There is first the matter of "weighting" such comparisons among schools, to allow for socioeconomic differences in pupils' family backgrounds. Another technique some programs have tried is to evaluate an individual school's record of improvement over time. Then, it is important to keep in mind changes in the populations served by a school. In the Chicago school system, many principals have attempted to have their schools designated as open enrollment schools. Such a designation does not necessarily mean they will stop serving children from low income families. However, it does mean that the motivation of their current pupils' families may be somewhat different than their previous pupil population.

Again, there are variations among the objective tests applied in different systems. How will the evaluation process account for this?

Finally, the persistent operation of any significant recognition program which strongly relies on test scores will gradually motivate schools to cheat in test administration. Indeed, if a recognition program cannot stir up any school interest in test cheating, perhaps the program does not have adequate public impact. There should be a monitoring system to insure the basic data are relatively honest. (Discrete questions to students, by site visitors, might be a good way of monitoring test administration in competing schools; indeed, the threat of such future questioning could be a useful deterrent to cheating.)

OTHER RECOGNITION SYSTEMS

In conclusion, let me say something about recognition systems in a more general light. We all sense that there are many powerful and long-persisting forms of public recognition systems. These include: the Nobel Prizes; the Pulitizer Prizes; the awards of nobility, which are still viewed as important in democratic Great Britain; the elaborate systems of recognition of pupil academic and athletic merit now found in many of our schools; and the recognitions in both amateur and professional athletics for winning teams and successful athletes. And my list could be expanded. But I will subject one mature system to more extended analysis: the system of medals used by the armed services in all contemporary countries--but, particularly, the systems now applied in the American armed services.

American Military Medals

It is true that that system largely focuses on individual recognition. But, as I have suggested, there are many parallels between the conceptual challenges facing systems of either individual or collective recognition. In addition, all modern military organizations have relatively complex systems for making comparisons about the efficiency of different subordinate units. However, since the criteria applied in such comparisons are necessarily specialized, they do not have a significant public history.

There are a variety of levels of military awards to individuals. The more prestigious ones go to people who work where motivation is most important and difficult--showing courage in combat where one's life is at serious risk. (For myself, I wonder where our current systems of recognition actually award

the schools with the hardest jobs.) Still, there are lesser levels of military awards, specifically applying to non-combat situations.

Important awards are distributed in elaborate formal ceremonies. The highest combat award, the Congressional Medal of Honor, is usually personally awarded by the President. In the case of many other awards, assemblies of service members are gathered to witness the occasions. The existence of these assemblies provides the winners with public recognition--a form of fame--and reminds the persons assembled that they too may be able to mimic the winner's courage and earn similar recognition.

Written Citations

Important military awards are accompanied by written citations. They describe the feats involved in clear and dramatic terms. The citations are read as part of the awarding process. American service members do not usually wear their medals after receiving their awards. But they are expected to wear ribbons on their uniforms, which symbolize their different awards, and which can be interpreted by informed persons.

In addition to deliberate individual awards, certain classes of automatic awards--recognized by medals and ribbons--are also provided. There are medals for serving in particular, predefined combat theatres of action. These can be supplemented with small battle stars, one for each defined combat campaign the wearer participated in. There are other medals for marksmanship, good conduct, and so on. There is also a tradition of awarding particular ribbons to all service members serving in units which have earned special distinction. Units are also entitled to attach battle streamers to their unit flags. Each

streamer signifies a particular action in which the unit participated. Particular streamers may even signify battles fought over one hundred years ago.

All awards worn by individuals are evinced not only by medals, and the right to wear ribbons, but also by written entries in individual personnel records.

Other Countries

Some international practices vary in awarding military honors and are quite interesting. In the Soviet Armed Forces, service members routinely wear their actual medals on their uniforms. In Britain, winners of more significant awards, even after they are civilians, conventionally place the initials of their awards (D.S.M.) after their names on documents. In the German Army during World War II, special efforts were made to have important decisions about individual combat awards made within about twenty four hours of combat incidents, so deserved medals were quickly awarded.

In the American services, considerable effort has also gone into the operation and design of these diverse systems. During the Vietnam War, all decisions about the award of the Congressional Medal of Honor were personally reviewed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the armed services.

In World War II, President Roosevelt and Army Chief of Staff Marshall corresponded about the criteria to be applied in awarding medals to soldiers medals for overseas service. Marshall favored providing soldiers with such awards immediately after they arrived abroad. Roosevelt felt this was too easy. Someone might earn two or more different awards after one lengthy plane

trip. Marshall argued that Americans making the sacrifice of serving abroad needed some immediate sign of recognition. Roosevelt finally acceded. This issue is not whether Marshall or Roosevelt was correct; instead, the point is that two such busy, able, and important people saw such issues are worthy of detailed attention.

Implications

Every particular recognition system has its own frame of reference. Thus, it is far easier to identify and describe individual physical courage than to identify and describe good schools. And the military system is relatively mature; it has taken hundreds of years to attain its current levels of development.

Still, the persistence and refinement of many systems of public collective and individual recognition is a striking phenomenon. It is powerful evidence that such systems are important tools for motivating human beings. It is a good thing that we are beginning to seriously apply this tool to our elementary and secondary schools. Let us hope our process of application continues its current course of development.

FIVE RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

D.J. Peterson

California State Education Department

The following text provides descriptions of five separate operating school recognition programs. Their patterns of both diversity and basic commonalities are remarkable. One of the programs is nationwide--and sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. Two are statewide, and sponsored by the State Education Departments of California and South Carolina. One is district wide, and organized pursuant to an agreement between Dade County, Florida, school district, and the local teachers union (and assisted by funds provided by Florida state legislation). The fifth operates throughout the Chicago area, and is generally sponsored by the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Some of the school assessments done by the programs rely largely on-off-on-shelf data, typically already generated by state testing requirements. Others solicit more diverse information, or even stimulate local school planning efforts designed to earn recognition.

The striking diversity of these programs--within the basic framework of accepting explicit competition--is remarkable evidence of the adaptability of the recognition principle.

THE NATIONAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM,

SPONSORED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The purpose of the National Elementary School Recognition Program is to identify and call attention to a national group of unusually successful public elementary schools. For a school to be recognized, there must be clear evidence that virtually all its students are developing a solid foundation of skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. In addition, there must be evidence that school programs, policies and practices foster the development of sound character, democratic values, ethical judgement, and self-discipline.

Instructional programs should be organized to provide students--appropriate to age and grade level--knowledge of literature, history, geography, science, economics and other subjects that the state and school system deem important. There should be strong leadership and an effective working relationship between the school and the parents of its students and with others in its community. The school should have an atmosphere that is orderly, purposeful, and conducive to learning. The school should demonstrate attentiveness to the quality of instruction, the professionalism of teachers, and the lasting importance of knowledge for students and staff alike. Finally, for a school to be recognized there must be a strong and efficacious commitment to educational excellence for all its students, together with a record of progress in sustaining its best features and solving its problems.

Eligibility criteria

For this program, an elementary school is any school that includes at least three grades between-8 and has its own administrator. The elementary components of K-12 and 1-12 schools are eligible for consideration. Middle schools are eligible, providing that they have not participated in the Secondary School Recognition Program.

A school must also meet one of the following criteria:

**During each of the last three years, 75% or more of the students must have achieved at or above grade level in mathematics and reading. (Schools which have experienced an enrollment change of 15% or more excluding the first grade, in one or more of the last three years, will be eligible if 65% or more of the students achieved at or above grade level during the year in which enrollment changed.)

**During each of the last three years, the number of students who achieved at or above grade level in mathematics and reading must have increased by an average of 5% annually and in the last year 50% or more of the students must have achieved at or above grade level in both areas.

State or school district definitions of what constitutes achievement "at grade level" should be used to determined whether a school is eligible for consideration. Schools from districts or states in which there are no definitions of achievement at grade level are not eligible for consideration.

Quality Indicators

Once it has been determined that a school is eligible, the following criteria will guide the selection of schools for recognition:

1. Quality of school organization

2. Quality of building leadership

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3. Quality of instructional program and curriculum, including character development

4. Quality of instruction

5. Quality of school climate

6. Quality of school/community relations

7. Quality of efforts to make improvements and to maintain high quality programs

8. Quality of student outcomes

There are no specific standards to be met in the eight areas listed here. Rather, the quality of each school will be judged in the context of how well its programs are tailored to local circumstances. In special circumstances, review panels may consider school that does not meet all the eligibility criteria provided compelling evidence of school quality and effectiveness is presented in the nomination form.

THE NATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The purpose of the Secondary School Recognition Program is to identify the call attention to a national group of secondary schools that are unusually successful in meeting the educational needs of all of their students. In seeking successful schools, the program also seeks schools that have overcome obstacles and problems and that are continuing to concentrate on improvement. It is assumed that these efforts will be reflected in program innovation as well as improved outcomes during the past several years.

A comprehensive application is provided to obtain a profile of each school.

The form requests information about a variety of factors associated with success as well as information about a number of outcomes. It also asks for information about changes that have occurred in the school as a result of its your efforts to do a better job.

The 14 attributes of success which will be used to examine the overall quality of your school include:

1. Clear educational goals
2. High expectations for students
3. Order, discipline, and freedom from drug use
4. Rewards and incentives for students
5. Regular and frequent monitoring of student progress
6. Development of good character and values
7. Teacher efficacy
8. Rewards and incentives for teachers
9. Concentration on academic learning time
10. Positive school climate
11. Administrative leadership

12. Well-articulated curriculum

13. Evaluation for instructional improvement, and

14. Parent and community support and involvement.

The following indicators of success will be used to examine the school:

1. Student performance on standardized achievement tests

2. Student performance on minimum competency tests

3. Student success in high school

4. Daily student and teacher attendance rates and rates of student suspensions and other exclusions

5. Dropout rates

6. Awards for outstanding school programs and teaching and

7. Student awards in academic or vocational competitions, e.g. science fairs, essay contests, and industrial arts competitions.

In looking forward to the celebration of the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, special attention will be paid to programs and courses that teach about democracy and the U.S. Constitution in a creative and effective way, as well as to the teaching of American history in general.

CONTACT

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THE CALIFORNIA SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM, SPONSORED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BACKGROUND

In 1984 educators and members of the business and educational communities throughout the state launched a massive educational reform movement in California. We worked together to help students gain he skills and knowledge necessary to be productive citizens.

Because we wanted to demonstrate progress in student's performance as soon as possible, we developed a major accountability program for which we set goals and developed necessary to be productive citizens.

During 1984 and 85, reading and mathematics scores in nearly two-thirds of California's high schools showed marked improvement when ranked against national test results. Other positive indicators, including increased enrollments in academic courage and higher student performance in specific curriculum areas, are also being observed.

To showcase these important gains, the State Department of Education established the California School Recognition Program, an important component of the State's reform efforts, in 1985-86. This annual program is devoted to recognizing outstanding educational achievement throughout the California school system. The recognition awards are made in the following four categories:

Distinguished Schools

Schools showing outstanding achievement

Exemplary programs and people

Outstanding students

DISTINGUISHED SCHOOLS

During the program's first statewide awards ceremony in October, 1986, 30 high schools and 60 middle schools from throughout the state were honored as California Distinguished Schools. The ceremony was sponsored by the California Educational Initiatives Fund (CEIF) contributing members of CEIF include: Chevron U.S.A. Inc.; BankAmerica Foundation; First Interstate Bank of California Foundation; McKesson Foundation; Pacific Telesis Foundation; Security Pacific Foundation; and Wells Fargo Foundation. The winning schools received plaques and flags in recognition of their achievements. Over 700 persons attended the awards ceremony including school principals, teachers, students, school board members, district superintendents, and legislators.

Criteria and Process for Selecting the Distinguished Schools

A comprehensive screening process, which took several months to complete, determined the winning schools. The first phase of the screening included a thorough computer analysis of various quality indicators, including the routine annual school performance reports (including pupil test scores) from California's 1,500 schools with eighth grades, and 800 high schools. Those schools which ranked in the top 20 percent of comparable nominated schools demonstrating the highest overall performance were nominated. Those that ranked within the top 10 percent of the total number of schools showing the greatest improvement also were nominated.

The nominated schools were then asked to complete an extensive application form, designed to offer each school an opportunity to detail the variety and strengths of its respective programs. Finally, state and county

education representatives personally visited each nominated school to evaluate the facility. The official winners were announced in June, 1986; the list also included 40 middle schools that placed as runners-up in the ranking process.

In 1986-87, 559 of the state's 4,500 elementary schools were nominated, 412 wrote applications, and 279 were selected to receive site visits. Approximately 250 of these schools were selected as California Distinguished Schools. Over 1,500 persons attended the Awards Ceremony and Luncheon on June 5, 1987 in Los Angeles. Schools chosen as California Distinguished Schools also advanced to the U.S. Department of Education's National School Recognition Program competition for their appropriate grade level.

SCHOOLS SHOWING OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

Each year the Department will identify schools that score highest or show the greatest improvement on each of the quality indicators. Schools showing the greatest improvement will be identified statewide without regard to comparison groups. Schools may receive outstanding achievement awards for more than one indicator. The State Department of Education provided, in 1986, over 1,100 certificates to senior high schools for outstanding achievement in individual quality indicators.

EXEMPLARY PROGRAMS AND PEOPLE

Schools will be selected according to their performance in implementing the various programs of the educational reform movement (for example, improving the curriculum) and in meeting the predetermiend quality criteria for programs in the following areas:

Bilingual education

Compensatory education

English language arts

Foreign language

Health education and drug abuse prevention and intervention

History-social science

Mathematics

Migrant education

Science

Special education

Visual and performing arts

Vocational education

Outstanding people will include those credited for the planning and implementation of an exemplary program. Also, individuals from the business community, private industry, colleges and universities, community agencies, and offices of county superintendents of schools will be recognized. In future years, programs and people in additional subject areas will be recognized.

OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

Secondary students who achieve very high levels of performance will be recognized, including valedictorians and salutatorians at every California high school, outstanding students in vocational education programs, students who receive state or national merits awards, students who make exceptional contributions to their community or school, and students who have gained recognition in other areas related to education. The State Department of

Education provided 1,600 certificates of recommendation to outstanding students in California in 1986.

HOW WILL WINNERS BE SELECTED?

School administrators, teachers, members of school boards and the business community throughout the state have developed statewide and local quality indicators that reflect the educational reform movement's goals for students. The criteria for selecting winners in each of the four preceding categories will be based on these criteria, which include the following.

STATEWIDE INDICATORS USED IN RATING

At all grade levels: increased scores on California Assessment Program tests; improved student attendance; and an increased number of writing and homework assignments

At the high school level: increased enrollment in mathematics, English, science, history-social science, foreign language, and visual and performing arts courses, and in courses required for admissions to the University of California; increased numbers of students meeting he State Board of Education's model graduation standards; improved performance of college-bound students on the Scholastic Aptitude Test and on Advanced Placement Examinations; reduced dropout rates; and increased numbers of students in extracurricular activities

HONORING WINNERS

Winners in the distinguished schools category will be honored at an elaborate awards ceremony each year by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, legislators, members of the California School Recognition Program Advisory Committee, and representatives from the private sector who co-sponsor the event.

Schools receiving outstanding achievement awards will be honored at ceremonies occurring at the county and district levels.

TYPES OF AWARDS

Awards include flages, plaques, certificates, letters of commendation, and national and statewide recognition.

IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A major challenge was the logistics of implementing a new program in a large state with over seven thousand of schools, in over 1,000 school districts. Criteria for nominating schools had to be established as a first step. Second, a selection process needed to be developed that was rigorous and reliable. The solution to establishing a rigorous and reliable selection process was accomplished through the development of a 13 page application based on school effective criteria, county/regional screening and rating of the applications, and a site visit procedure to validate what was described in the written application. A third problem--manpower--was solved by identifying educators at each of our 58 county offices of education to be county coordinators for the school recognition program. They have assisted as a

communication link for all phases of the selection process, have organized local follow-up awards ceremonies, and have provided excellent public relations with the media.

BENEFITS

The California School Recognition Program is dedicated to fostering the pursuit of educational excellence. As the program develops, it will provide increased public awareness and support for those schools that display and deserve academic distinction. These schools, in turn, will serve as models for other schools seeking to improve--and to excel.

CONTACT

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All available for $3.00 each, plus sales tax for California residents, California Sate Department of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95802-0271

THE SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL INCENTIVE REWARD PROGRAM, SPONSORED BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The South Carolina School Incentive Reward Program was established by the Education Improvement Act of 1984. The Program is now in its second year of statewide implementation. For 1986-87, the State Board of Education approved incentive rewards for 248 public schools, or approximately one-fourth of the school in the state, 17 area vocational centers, and 6 school districts. The criteria for the program include student achievement gain, as determined through a matched-longitudinal analysis of test scores, student attendance, and teacher attendance. No school received a monetary reward unless the achievement gain criterion was met.

AWARDS

The 1986-87 statewide appropriation for the School Incentive Reward Program was $6.77 million, a figure which translated to $54.79 per pupil when all three criteria were met. Schools meeting only the achievement gain criterion received 80% of the per pupil reward amount. Those schools meeting both the achievement gain criterion and one of the attendance criteria received 90% of the per pupil allocation while those meeting all three received 100% of per pupil allocation. The reward amounts ranged from several hundred dollars for the smallest schools to more than $100,000 for the largest schools. Twenty high schools, 41 middle/junior high schools, and 187 elementary schools were named reward winners. Schools receiving rewards were distributed fairly evenly according to school background characteristics.

Nonmonetary Awards

In addition to the monetary rewards, reward recipient schools also received school incentive reward flags and certificates, symbolic of their status as school incentive reward winners.

District Awards

Six school districts, in which two-thirds or more of the schools were selected for rewards, received district rewards of three dollars per pupil. The smallest district reward was $3,400 while the largest was almost $17,000.

The Use of Reward Funds

Each recipient school and district was required to submit for approval to the Office of School District Accreditation and Assessment a plan and a budget for expending the reward funds. The School Local Improvement Council must actively actively participate in the decisions relative to the use of the monies. The funds are earmarked for further improvements in the school's programs. They cannot be used to enhance the salaries of existing staff or to supplant regular school district funds.

Honorable Mention Recipients

Schools which demonstrated performance approaching the monetary reward standard received certificates symbolic of their status as honorable mention recipients. In order to be selected as an honorable mention recipient, either (1) the student achievement gain must have been somewhat above expectation and both attendance criteria must have been met.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MAKING YOUR SCHOOL INCENTIVE PROGRAM A SUCCESS

1. The criteria of the program must be perceived as fair and equitable. Who wins will strongly influence and perception and fairness. There should be a broad organizational patterns. If, for example, there is an absence of schools serving poor students among the rewarded schools, there will be constituents who will maintain that the program rewards only affluent schools-- "The rich get richer." Sufficient staff time should be allocated to ensure the development of a fair and equitable plan.

2. Local school and district personnel must be included in the program's planning and development. The participants should be the leaders within the school community. Support by boards of trustees, superintendents, key principals, and the leadership of the teachers is essential.

3. The program's purposes and criteria must be clearly communicated. Separate descriptions of the program for lay, educator, and technical audiences should be developed, and sufficient staff time should be set aside for communications efforts, a substantial portion of which should precede the announcement of awards. Most audiences are far more willing to listen to and accept the rationale and criteria for an awards program prior to the announcement of "winners."

4. Sufficient funds should be allocated to make the reward "meaningful." While the availability of regular funding influences perceptions of value, it appears that about $100 per student enrolled in the school, or $5,000 for a school enrolling 500 students is a useful minimum target.

5. Non-monetary reward objects, such as certificates, plaques, trophies, and flags, which are symbolic of the school's accomplishments, should be included in the reward structure. Non-monetary rewards are effectively utilized by a variety of institutions and organizations from the military to the Boy Scouts.

6. Clear and specific guidelines must be developed which indicate how and for what purposes the reward funds may be spent. The school's advisory groups should actively participate in the determination of how to spend the money.

7. An adequate data base to support the program must either exist or be developed. While excessive data collection should be avoided, the data collection efforts required to support the program should be anticipated. If, for example, student achievement gain is one of the program's criteria, the testing program in the school must be adequate to the task of providing the appropriate data.

8. A process evaluation of the program should be conducted to assess the perceptions of various groups, such as administrators, teacher, students, and parents toward the program. A steering committee should periodically review relevant data and recommend appropriate modification.

THE FUTURE OF THE PROGRAM

The School Incentive Program will continue to evolve and improve. The modifications for 1986-87 included a major change in the way that student

achievement gain was determined. A matched-longitudinal analysis replaced the cross-sectional approach of the previous year. Area vocational centers were included in the reward structure, as required by legislative mandate. Reward objects were extended and enhanced. The honorable mention recipient category was added. In the future, additional program criteria such as parent participation and student attitudes toward learning may be included, provided that valid and reliable measurement of these factors can be accomplished inexpensively and without creating additional paperwork for schools and districts.

PUBLICATIONS

CONTACTS

Dr. John May, Supervisor, School Incentive Program, Office of District Accreditation and Assessment, South Carolina State Department of Education, Columbia, South Carolina, 29201, (803) 734-8277

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THE QUALITY INSTRUCTION INCENTIVES PROGRAM (QUIIP), SPONSORED BY THE DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE UNITED TEACHERS OF DADE, AFL-CIO

BACKGROUND

In 1984, the state of Florida passed a law, the Quality Instruction Incentives Program (QUIIP). QUIPP encourages the establishment of local school district recognition programs, with the cooperation of teachers unions. QUIIP provided that districts which developed such cooperative plans (that were approved by the state), would be allocated state funds to be divided among winning schools. The Dade County School Distict and the United Teachers of Dade (the local AFT union) entered into an amendment to the existing labor agreement, providing for such a recognition program. It is jointly adminisered by the district and the union school participation.

STRUCTURE

Potential participating schools are divided into three categories: elementary; middle/junior; and senior high. No school will be allowed or required to participate unless the consent of two-thirds of the "eligible" voting employees at the school site. In other words, participation is not simply a management decision.

EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

Even if a school's employees overwhelming vote to participate in the QUIIP program, individual employees in that school have theright to opt out. The contract provides that any employee exercising such an option will not be

subject to any retailation. In practice, employees of participating schools have very rarely exercised that option.

Eligibility

Employees eligible to vote on participation, or receive benefits, included members of the union's bargaining unit at the school, administrators, and full-time maintenance, custodial and cafeteria personnel at the school.

In 1986-87, 136 of the district's 178 elementary schools choose to participate, and 42 of the participants received some form of recognition; the equivalent figures for the district's junior and senior high schools were respectively 29,48 and 14 (junior highs), and 16,24 and 7 (senior highs).

Awarded schools were designated either Quality (Q) schools, or the higher designation, Education Excellence schools (E2). The criteria for these two levels are as follows:

Q School--determined by the relative gain in student achievement on the Standford Achievement test, and by attaining at least an 85 percent participation of eligible students or maintaining the 85-86 participation rate (whichever is greater), on a standardized physical fitness test.

E2 Schools -- chosen from the Q schools, based on development and acheivement of a school-focused plan to improve student performance. Each participating school in the district -- every school aspiring to the eventual E-2 status -- will have the faculty and school adminstration, working as a team, develop and implement such a plan of its own choosing. The plan must be designed to correct and/or improve some aspect of student achievement in the school. E-2 schools have designed and carried out the "best" plans.

Awards/Shares

In all three categories of schools, monetary shares will be awarded to all partcipating, full-time, certificated employees. Pro-rata shares will be distributed to (a) full-time, eligible, certificated, itinerant employees assigned to participating schools and (b) eligible, certificated, part-time employees assigned to participating schools. Shares will be no less than $500 for each full-time, certificated employee at Q schools; $1,000 for such employees at E2 schools.

QUIIP Committee

A district-wide QUIIP Committee is established to assure the orderly and equitable implementation of the program and to establish additional guidelines and definitions as necessary. Committee members consist of six persons, three appointed by the Superintendent of Schools and three appointed by the Executive Vice-President of UTD.

Technical Review Panel

A committee of technicians was established to review all of the data, methodology and statistical information, and make technical recommendations to the QUIIP Committee.

Educational Excellence Awards Committee

Established to review all data consistent with applicable state statutes and to select E2 schools.

IMPLICATIONS

Dade County Public Schools met the challenge of quality education with a plan that emphasize teamwork and commitment. Our Quality Instruction Incentives program proves that a merit schools plan works. QUIIP is a success because of the dedication of the personnel in each school to the program. Teamwork means the involvement in the learning process of everyone: students, parents, administrators, teachers and support personnel. Their hard work is rewarded by student achievement.

Teamwork also is evident in the joint efforts of the school system and UTD in the local QUIIP plan. The innovative agreement we have reached in developing QUIIP will continue to enhance professionalism. The challenge of the program as it begins its third year is to reach new levels of excellence in our school system.

The 1985-86 response in the QUIIP schools was tremendous. The schools which exceeded their goals are rewarded as Quality schools and the nine schools and two special centers which made the greatests advances are recognized as E2 schools, examples of educational excellence.

However, this is not a contest with winners and losers. There are no losers in QUIIP. The program's success is measured by achievement in the classroom and the success was significant in every school that participated. All QUIIP schools are winners because they set their own goals, met the challenge, and increased the knowledge and skills of their students.

Dade County educators are committed to the QUIIP program's goals, which foster better teaching and better learning in our classrooms. The dedication of each school is to quality education. That commitment is evident in every

school that participated, every school recognized for quality education, and every school rewarded for educational excellence.

CONTACTS

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PUBLICATIONS

Dade County Public Schools and United Teachers of Dade. (1986). QUIPP: The Quality Instruction Incentives Program. Miami: Author.

THE FOR CHARACTER SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM, SPONSORED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

BACKGROUND

The program was developed from extensive research done in Chicago area schools by students supervised by the (now) Executive Secretary. The research focussed on schools' abilities to meet both the academic and character-development needs of their pupils. Eventually, a governing board broadly representative of Chicago-area public and private schools was recruited. So far, this board has developed and carried out the program over three cycles: 1982-83, 1984-85, and 1986-87.

The program recognizes public and private elementary and secondary Chicago area schools doing an exemplary job of developing pupil character and academic learning. In each cycle, about 2,000 schools were invited to participate, about 300 requested school assessment forms (the basis of participation), about 200 completed forms were submitted, and about twenty schools passed through the complete assessment process to be designated winners. Many subcategories of participants exist, to allow for the numerous differences in circumstances among schools, e.g., elementary or secondary, serving affluent or overty populatons, public or private schools. Schools which are dropped from the process as non-winners receive certifications of recognition, i.e., Finalist, Semi-Finalist, Participant. The names of all participating schools, except winners, are kept confidential by the program.

Types of Awards

Public recognition, via being designated at a banquet at a prestigous hotel, media publicity, and receiving a handsome plaque and specially designed banner.

Criteria and Process of Selection

School assessment form with about 80 items requires schools to submit a large body of quantitative data about the poclicies and processes of the school. These items disclose: the levels of pro-social conduct practiced by students; the means of recognizing such conduct; the rigor of the school's administration; the academic demands it makes on pupils; and basic demographic and socio-economic data. Form takes one to four staff/hours to complete. Schools are "screened" via (a) the computer processing of the forms, to identify schools with higher good numbers than other, similarly situated schools, (b) in the second round, the submission of narative materials plus school documents, (c) site visits for the third round schools, resulting in written visitors' reports, largely directed at verifying the data in the assessment form, and (d) final screening and designation by an awards committee, reviewing the assembled data.

IMPLEMENTATION PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Designing an instrument and assessment process which was rigorous, legitimate, and not too costly or cumbersome was a challenge. The problem was further complicated by our determination to examine both academics and

character. But we eventually developed an approach which defined "character" as: good pupil discipline; many forms of helping conduct; and extensive forms of recognition for such conduct. Then, we designed a series of questions which required schools to describe such conduct in clear, reliable ways, which lend themselves to interschool comparisons. Furthermore, the form can be completed by participating schools with only relatively modest investments of staff time.

We also publish a ten page booklet, after each cycle (but before the award banquet) describing the policies of the awarded schools, and identifying them. The booklet receives relatively wide circulation. We believe it further stimulates schools to improve their policies. One unique program feature which gratifies us is that the different categories covered by the program encourages schools in very diverse circumstances to participate. It also means that our winners include schools which deserve to be honored, though they do not satify certain "gold plated" criteria. Funding has been our most persisting problem--even though the program only costs about $25,000 a year. Each of the three cycles have been funded from separate sources. No firm funding base has yet been identified.

Research Issues

Are winning schools notably different than non-participants along the lines identified in the assessment form? Do schools which give unusual stress to pupil character also stress academics? (Some of these issues are now being addressed in a research project underway, funded by the U.S. Department of Education.)

Benefits and Highlights of the Program

We have discovered many practicing educators are concerned about character ssues, and have been encouraged by the program. Other sympathetic educators have been stimulated to use the assessment form as a checklist, and examine and restructure present school policies. Communication has also been improved among the schools and educators participating.

CONTACT

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PUBLICATIONS

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TECHNICAL ISSUES IN DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

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Any persisting school recognition program will inevitably confront a basic issue substantial technical questions are involved in the collection and analysis of the data on which recognition must be based. For example, some readers may assume that all an efficient program needs to do is simply recognize schools whose average pupil achievement scores are higher than most other schools. However, as one reads our paper, one will discover innumerable real and potential defects in such reflexive approaches. Thus, as we report, we conducted a series of computer analyses of existing test score data from South Carolina schools.

Our analyses disclosed that the schools designated "winning schools"--according to our data bank--might vary considerably, according to the different statistical techniques applied. Under one set of assumptions, a certain group of schools would comprise the top ten percent--the presumed best. Under other assumptions, that could be corrably justified, a somewhat different group of schools would be designated as the top ten percent. Some of the same schools were contained in both top groups; but many schools were

in one group, and not in the other. As recognition programs persist, some educators will become more conscious of the real latent controversies underlying the programs' assumptions, and begin to ask more hard questions.

The responses to such now buried questions will eventually raise issues which cannot be easily comprehended by intelligent laypersons--just as intelligence alone does not allow laypersons to clearly comprehend financial accounting, nuclear engineering, or hematology. However, in may other fields of human endeavor, such complexity does not debarr the possibility of progress; there is simply a recognition that there is a place for expert judgment, and that forums can be developed to subject such opinions to healthy professional debate.

Similarly, in the case of school recognition, we believe it will be unsound for progress to be frustrated by the inevitability of technical complexity. And it will be equally unsound to maintain programs which fail to confront the technical issues underlying school recognition. However, there are better and worse answers. And, indeed, one authority has contended that, even in the long existing field of business accounting, after hundreds of years, we have only succeeded in attaining "substantial" accuracy (Wynne, 1972). Against this background, we believe that the current technical quality of school recognition programs is generally defensible--although there is surely need for improvement. We expect that such improvement will continue to occur, as the very operation of such programs generates continued and healthy controversy. But we are going in a constructive direction.

This paper will discuss the collection and processing of data to be used in school recognition programs (SRPs) and examine ways in which those data can

be used to make better quality recognition decisions. Our analysis will undoubtedly be partly influenced by our considerable experience as consultants to the South Carolina school recognition program.

SRPs vary on at least four major dimensions: 1) how school eligibility to participate in each program is determined; 2) what types of criteria are used to identify winners; 3) psychometric and data collection issues; and 4) now--and by whom--the ultimate decisions are made. Obviously, the third dimension--the measurement and collection of data--involves more technical expertise than the others; thus, it will serve as the first theme of our paper. The implications of the other three dimension will be considered later in the paper. Before the technical issues are addressed, however, some preliminary points which will be made that will impact the discussion.

Wynne, in a paper in this text, has noted that the "philosophic foundations of the program--what it views as virtue--[must be] evident, and basically defensible to the audience concerned. Then a justifiable technology of information collection and analysis must be applied". We agree with these statements; in fact, in Mandeville (1985) and Mandeville and Anderson (1985), the key issues were the development of award systems that were <u>fair</u>, which seems closely related to Wynne's phrase "a justifiable technology." Since money, prestige, or both are involved as awards, an SRP must be perceived as fair to the educational community. In the next section we will present examples to identify some of the technical difficulties to providing fair recognition.

FAIRNESS AND THE USE OF ACHIEVEMENT SCORE DATA

Most SRPs include student achievement test scores as a part of the criteria by which award-winning schools are recognized; few would argue against the use of this type of evidence. In some cases minimal student achievement scores enter as a standard for eligibility, i.e., as screening device to identify candidate schools. In others, good student achievement scores are directly related to whether a school is recognized (and possibly the degree of recognition or size of the monetary award). The following are a few of the issues that might be raised about fairness as it relates to the use of student achievement score data in SRPs.

A Double Standard

In some SRPs, certain schools (usually low performing ones) must demonstrate an increase in student achievement scores, whereas other schools (usually high performing ones), must simply maintain their current high level of student achievement. The different standards applied to these two types of schools are usually quite arbitrary, and suffer from a number of faults. The most obvious is that differences in the socio-economic-status (SES) of students' families has not been considered. The first group of schools, the low performers, usually serves low SES students, whereas high SES students populate the high performers. Thus, improvement in test performance of student sin low performing schools is required, while the maintenance of status quo test scores in high performing schools is rewarded. This appears to be a dichotomy of standards. It seems on the face to be unfair, and suggests that improvement in high performing schools is either unexpected, impossible or unnecessary.

The Equity Issue

A second issue has to do with equity in the Edmondsian (refering to the notable contentions of Ron Edmonds) sense. A number of basically high SES, high performing schools with which the authors are familiar small have numbers of low SES students. These particular students tend to be members of minority groups. Because the majority of the students in these schools are high SES, however, improvement of these typically low scoring minority students is of no import as regards recognition for such schools. The dual standards plan mentioned above is used make the improvement of the few students unimportant for attaining recognition. Aggregating data to the school level for high performing schools masks the lower performance of this small number of lower SES students; maintenance of the school's relatively high test scores requires simply the maintenance of the performance for the relatively large proportion of high SES students. Thus, low SES students in low performing schools would be required to improve, while comparable students in high performing schools would not.

The Use of a Selected Grade or Grades

In some SRPs, certain grade levels and/or subject areas are selected to represent the achievements of all students in the school. For example, 3rd grade reading achievement might serve as the basis for an SRP as it relates to all elementary schools enrolling 3rd grade students.

Such a decision can have complex ramifications. Depending upon the number of elementary schools included in the SRP, as well as other factors, the diversity in the organization of these schools with the following grade-

level patterns (and others) would be represented in pool of contestants: "123", "23", "34", "3456", "1234", "2345", "123456", and "12345678". Note that for the "23" and "34" schools, 3rd grade reading achievement would cover roughly one-half of the students in the school; but the same achievement estimate would represent only about one-eight of the children in the "12345678" schools. Furthermore, the "3456" schools would only have instructed the 3rd grade students for but a single year, while the typical 3rd grader in the "123" schools, would have been in the same school for all three grades.

All of this means that comparisons among schools based on any designated grade may be greatly affected by the position of that grade in the structure of the particular school. Is that grade at the beginning point of the particular school's whole program, or at the end--or in the middle? And do the students in that grade represent a minor fraction of the school's population, or a large segment; for, the smaller or larger the proportion the grade represents, the lesser or greater the statistical validity which can be attributed to any inter-school comparison.

Using the Highest Grade

Suppose a single grade level is to be used to represent overally achievement in any school. If so, the choice of student scores for the highest grade in the school seems reasonable. In the highest grade the cumulative effects of the school experience should be accurately manifest in the achievement of these students.

At one time, personnel in the South Carolina Department of Education considered conducting its state SRP using achievement data from only students in the highest grade in participating schools. The Department enaged the senior author to conduct a study to investigate the empirical features of such an approach. One of the questions to be investigated was whether the same schools would be identified for an award if data for the penultimate grade, i.e., the next to the highest grade, were used. The disturbing discovery was made that the different techniques identified that two rather different groups of schools. Only about one-third of the total pool of two groups of winners were worthy of recognition at both grade levels (see Mandeville, 1986). These results suggested that school may appear exemplary when gauged by the performance students at some grade levels, but be quite commonplace when the achievement of students at other grades is examined. The proposed plan was dropped.

One of the problems with the Mandeville (1986) study, however, was that it utilized what has been called "trend data" (e.g., the change between test scores of 3rd graders in 1985 compared with the scores of last year's 3rd graders--in 1984). This approach has an obvious problem. The home background of the 3rd grade student population may change from year-to-year, for reasons such as family mobility, changes in attendance zones, and the like. Some school administrators have used these reasons to excuse performance comparisons of this type. To some extent, then, the inconsistency among the schools which would have received awards under the plan analyzed might be partly explained due to population shifts. Nonetheless, the inconsistency of recognized schools across grade levels is a "fact of life," regardless of the reasons or reasons for this inconsistency.

Cross-Grade Consistency Using Longitudinal Data

To further address the issue of grade-level variation, Mandeville and Anderson (1986, in press) examined the consistency of a computer bank of test scores across grades 1-4 for 423 elementary schools in South Carolina. In this study, individual students were identified in each school for whom test scores in the same school were available for two consecutive years. Their scores in the spring of 1984 were used to predict their probable scores in the spring of 1985. Actual scores were then compared to predicted scores, to evaluate the quality of school performance, i.e., were students doing better or worse than predicted. This technique invalidated the argument that changes in the student body might explain the grade-level inconsistencies; each student was used as his or her own control (as in what is sometimes referred to as a repeated measures design).

Unfortunately, this effort brought another problem to light. South Carolina has a statewide school testing program--indeed, the data generated by the program were the basis for our analyses. One basic form of test is administered to pupils in grades 1-3, and another test to pupils in grade 4. The difference in tests is necessary, since the developmental span between grades 1 to 4 is so large that one test would be inappropriate for all ages. Thus, a different test come into play for grade 4. But, because of that shift in tests, it is hard to compare pupils' progress from grade 3 to 4. It is a somewhat apples and oranges situation. And this shift in tests undoubtedly affected the results of our analyses.

The main finding of the study of grades 1-4 was that the shifts in measured learning from grade to grade were very inconsistent.

If the 3rd grade made the measured grade, then one school would win; but if the 4th grade was made the grade measured, then another school would win. Correlations of measured school effectiveness were computed for total pools of all grades in each school. The relationship between high overall improvement, compared to high scores for any particular grade, were relatively low--in the 0 to .20 range. Thus, the previous finding--that rather different sets of schools would be identified depending upon which grade or grades or tests were included in the analysis--was verified in the more rigorous study. Furthermore, it was also demonstrated that aggregating the evidence across the four grade levels did not improve the reliability of the proposed indices.

Cross-Year Consistency

Mandeville (1987) extended the Mandeville and Anderson (1986) study to include two successive years of matched student test score data (actually three years of data) for essentially the same sample of schools. When he used the 1985 results to predict the 1986 test scores, the previous finding that the proposed indices are inconsistent across grades was corroborated. In other words, successive classes of students, passing through particular grades, did not all show the same levels of measured improvement. But there was some correlation between the performance of each of the groups. These correlations are not substantial. But, they at least suggest a degree of consistency in student performance in particular schools across years (when this performance is adjusted for previous achievement). It should be noted, however, that although different children were involved year-to-year, these correlations were computed at each grade level (not at the school level).

Thus, whatever we might make of these results, we must face the fact that they probably represent the strengths of the instructional staff at a given grade level. They do not support beliefs that schools are notably more or less effective in a more global sense. In fact, when the same cohort of students was considered (e.g., 1985 2nd graders vs. 1986 3rd graders), the correlations of the indices were similar to the cross-grade correlations cited earlier.

Varying Impacts of Schools on Different Subjects

We, as well as other researchers such as Rowan and Denk (1983), have identified yet another issue which bears on the use of comparative achievement data in SRPs. These studies indicate that in the early elementary grades, schools have a greater potential to impact pupils' mathematics scores than reading achievement. Furthermore, SES is more highly related to reading achievement than to mathematics achievement. These findings caused Mandeville and Anderson (1986) to suggest that "young children are more likely to gain knowledge and skills in areas such as reading from sources outside the school than is true for areas such as mathematics" (p. 15). If this explanation is valid, it would seem to be quite unfair for recognition programs to consider test results from these two basic skills as equally important is typically done in SRPs. Schools should be rewarded for improvement in the areas of student performance which they can and do influence; they should not be rewarded for areas which may be strongly influenced by what happened at home, or may otherwise be explained because of the SES or other characteristics of the communities they serve.

It should be noted that the potential relative impact of elementary schools on reading and mathematics achievement is not likely to be an isolated finding. As more studies are extended to the middle school and high school levels, it is quite likely that subjects such as the physical sciences and mathematics will be demonstrated to be more directly tied to classroom instruction than subjects such as language arts and the social sciences.

The Desire to Rank All Schools on a Common Scale

There is one final but exceedingly important point to be made before leaving this discussion. It has to do with our inherent desire to rank things and select winners. The Academy Awards, the World Series, the NFL playoffs and the eventual Super Bowl attest to our desire to select final winners. For many years some educators have desired to rank the educational products of our 50 states, and recent activities of the National Assessment of Educational Progress seem to be in line with this endeavor. The development of SRPs are a recent activity which is consistent with this general objective. We agree with Wynne (1987) that encouraging school improvement should be the overriding objective--compared to ranking contestants. However, it is not clear that this is always the case. Sometimes local pride seems to be more important, particularly in schools already achieving at high levels.

Returning to the major point, let us agree that (unfortunately?) in many cases the goal of SRPs is to rank the schools in a large district or state on the comparative achievement of their pupils. The question to be raised is whether it is possible to do this fairly. If it is, several conditions must be met. First, fairness would be served if it were possible to use a single

set of uniformly valid measuring devices covering all schools. For elementary schools, many of the current reading and mathematics tests may be appropriate for this purpose. For the sake of argument, let us assume that agreed-upon tests may be used for students in grades 1-5. Let us assume further that we are fortunate enough to have available base-line data on student ability or prior achievement; and skillful enough to use that data to adjust achievement scores to correct for the initial advantage (in pupil prior learning) that some schools enjoy over others. Finally, suppose that school level SES and other contextual factors are included in the analytic model, so that we feel confident that several major extraneous variables have been adequately controlled. At this point, it must be emphasized that we are allowing no variation for other circumstances affecting individual schools; all will be assessed according to the same yardstick. Furthermore, the statistical formulae used to produce the rankings must be consistent for all schools.

At the secondary school level, however, we believe that it will be much more difficult to find a generally agreed upon set of tests, since the primary aims and objectives of schools at this level will likely differ. Consider, for example, a class of 100 9th graders in a low SES high school where 50% of them read at the 5th grade level or below, and a class of 400 9th graders in a high school with 70% scoring above the national average. We doubt that a common set of objectives makes any sense for these two schools.

Thus, whereas it may be feasible, but difficult, to arrange all elementary schools on a common scale, we fail to see how such an arrangement for all secondary schools (and, therefore, all schools in general) is possible. The objectives are simply too diverse and the presence of tracking an elective course makes "common scale" meaningless.

The above arguments lead to the conclusion that, at least for secondary schools, overall aims and purposes must be identified and sets of local objectives aligned with these aims and purposes must be created. This "fact of life" may not be as bad as it sounds. It may be possible to classify schools into categories where similar objectives are the focus for a given year. Comparisons within categories could then be made. The alternative is a system in which specific measureable goals are set for each school for a year or some other time period. In fact Page (1972) proposed a system which allowed for individual school variation, but which he argued led to an "objective function", i.e., sort of GNP for education. His proposed system appears complex and will not be explicated here. However, by now readers realize that the basic measurement issues involved in recognition are inevitably complex--and if Page's proposed system was actually in operation, computer techniques would greatly accelerate its application. After all, to each of us, it seem that writing and cashing a bank check is a simple matter. But, on reflection, we recognized that passing and processing a check rests on a highly elaborated system--which we now take for granted. Similarly, the school recognition programs which are ultimately in operation in the future may rest on many taken-for-granted complexities.

THE DESIGN OF PROGRAMS

At the beginning of this paper we outlined four major dimensions of SRPs. In developing SRPs a number of choices can be made concerning each of these dimensions. With respect to dimension of eligibility, for example, schools may be declared eligible for participation in an SRP by 1) nomination by some

other institution or person, 2) application by the school, 3) having test scores above a certain minimal level, and 4) default (i.e., all must participate).

In the remainder of this paper, we shall review the various dimensions and the options currently available to those wishing to develop, implement, or redesign SRPs. Throughout the review we will offer our recommendations concerning the matters.

Eligibility

As mentioned above, four options concerning a school's eligibility are currently available and practiced. First, a school can be nominated for the program, either by someone within the school district or someone in an external educational agency (e.g., State Department of Education). Frechtling (1982), however, found uniformly negative relationships between "effective schools" based on expert opinion, and "effective schools" identified by four other methods which used reading test scores as evaluation tools. In interpreting the negative correlations, Frechtling noted that "expert opinion .. clearly divered from the others and results in the most unique set of schools." (p. 8). Obviously the experts did not incorporate test performance into their decision-making process. This suggests that worthy schools may be excluded from the program because they fail to "catch the eye" of those responsible for nominating schools, and some schools which are not particularly meritorious will be nominated. In sum, leaving participation up to nomination by others is not a good idea.

Second, a school can apply for eligibility. The only drawback inherent in this option is the burden of responsibility placed on the school's principal or administrative team (or in rare cases the teaching staff) to apply. Principals may choose not to apply because of false modesty, fear of failure, or the amount of work needed to complete the application. A simple and straightforward application form will help with this last potential problem, and public pressure may provide sufficient motivation to overcome initial timidity or fear of failure on the part of school administrators. Arrangements can also be made to keep all applications--except those of winners--confidential.

Third, a school can be declared eligible by some higher authority on the basis of prior achievement test results. From our analyses earlier in the paper, this option would probably result in different schools being eligible for the SRP in different years. In fact, if this is not the case, we would suspect that the methodology used to identify eligible schools is biased, either towards high performing schools (if the emphasis is on status) or low performing schools (if the emphasis on rewarding improvement). As a consequence, if this option is selected (and the relevant extraneous variables are properly controlled), Wynne's (1987) recommendation that different schools be "recognized" from year to year would likely be realized.

Fourth, schools may be eligible (and, in essence must participate) each year. If this option is chosen, it will likely be necessary to use extant data (as from a routine statewide assessment) to ultimately decide on those schools that will be recognized. The procurement of new, additional data would be difficult if not impossible. Such original collection efforts 1)

would require a massive amount of time and resources,a nd 2) would probably be met with some resistance on the part of administrators or teachers, or both, resulting in data of questionable reliability and validity.

Of the four options, we recommend either eligibility via application (with the contingent recommendation that the simplest yet most informative application form and process be developed) or eligibility based on prior achievement test scores. As will be seen, the choice between these options has implications for other dimensions of the SRP. We would discourage use of either of the other two options. Our negative recommendation of eligibility be default is supported by our proceeding analyses in this paper. Finally, our negative recommendation concerning eligibility by nomination is based partly on the results of the Frechtling (1982) study, and partly on our concerns for the factors that are considered by those responsible for making such nominations.

Criteria

Criteria refer to the factors or variables that will be considered in determining whether or not a school should receive a recognition award. Two global categories of criteria are typically referred to as "process criteria" and "outcome" criteria. In simplest terms, process criteria focus on the means; outcome criteria focus on the ends. Most of our discussion in the first half of this paper dealt with problems in analyzing different forms of outcome criteria, e.g., pupil test scores.

In SRPs, process criteria include factors or variables pertaining to what is happening in the schools. What are the <u>conditions</u> in the schools? What

are the administrators, teachers, and to a lesser extent students doing or, ever increasingly, expected to do? Process criteria have received a great deal of attention and emphasis in recent research and professional writing. Hallinger and Murphy (1986), for example, identify several viable process criteria: clear school mission, tightly coupled curriculum, opportunity to learn, instructional leadership, home-school cooperation and support, widespread student rewards, and high expectations. Rosenholtz (1985) adds several other reasonable process criteria: principal attitude and behavior, recruitment and selection of teachers, teacher evaluation, "buffering" (that is, the removal of obstacles that stand in the way of teaching), participation in decision-making, and norms of continuous improvement.

In SRP's, the primary outcome criterion has been achievement test scores. Attendance (teacher and student) and dropout rates also are frequently used. Finally, several "satisfaction" criteria, in the guise of parent, teacher, and student attitudes, have also been recommended for use in SRPs.

Both process and outcomes criteria have several deficiencies. We have already addressed the deficiencies of achievement test scores in great detail. Two other outcome criteria--attendance and dropout rates--are exceedingly difficult to operationalize. Consider teacher attendance, for example. Will excused absences be counted in the total? If not, what constitutes an excused absence--illness of a child or spouse, funeral of family member of close friend, attendance at professional meeting? Because of these difficulties, either SRP staff members will have to collect the data from well documented school records, or the information must be routinely collected in raw form so that a consistent definition can be applied across all schools. Satisfaction

data also are problematic as outcome criteria. In most schools, for example some parents are zealots in support of the school, some are neutral (assuming a "wait and see" or "too busy to care" attitude), and some are negative (disliking everything about the principal, and complaining quite loudly about the quality of education their children are receiving). Although an average attitude can be computed, we would suggest that the resulting statistic is meaningless. Furthermore, since administrators, teachers, parents, and students vary in their collective "points of view," the relationships among their perceptions are not likely to be strong.

Turning to process criteria, the prognosis is no better. Most of the process criteria included in the "effective schools" literature were chosen because of their relationship to some type of outcome criterion. In the early "effective schools" research, for example, the outcome criterion was the similarity of the proportions of lower and middle/upper class students scoring below the lowest national quartile on standardized achievement tests (Edmonds, 1979). One such process criteria have been identified, educators have a tendency to concentrate solely on such criteria, forgetting the outcome criteria that gave them life.

Although the process criteria may, in fact, be related to the outcomes criteria, two caveats must be proffered. First, typically the correlations between process and outcome measures are quite small and inconsistent across studies. This finding is especially clear in the so-called process-product research on teaching (e.g., Jayne, 1945; Brophy & Good, 1986). Thus, while no single process variable has been found to be reliably linked with outcome measures, composites of such variables have been found to be associated with outcome measures in a myriad of complex ways.

Second, as most first-year statistics students know, correlation does not imply causality. Thus, while observations of schools may indicate that many of the process criteria are in place, their being in place is no guarantee that the important educational outcomes will be realized.

In light of this discussion, we recommend a balance between process and outcome criteria in SRPs. Furthermore, if eligibility is determined by application, we would suggest erring on the side of outcome criteria. If, on the other hand, eligibility is determined by prior achievement test scores, we would recommend erring on the side of process criteria.

Neither process nor outcome criteria tell the whole story. Reliance on either will likely lead to misinterpretations and misunderstanding. We must admit, however, that inclusion of both types of criteria also offer challenges. It is to these challenges that we now turn.

Issues Affecting Psychometric Data Collection, and Aggregation

Typically, the collection of data on process criteria require asking questions, conducting observations, or both. Data gathered from either or both of these methods can be problematic. With respect to questionnaire data, the major problem is credibility. Since fame or fortune are strong motivators, those who answer the questions may paint a more optimistic picture than reality would allow. Wynne, in his piece in the text, includes the story of the school administrator who, having reported the public posting of an honor roll, was forced to admit during a site visit conducted by SRP staff members that it was not posted.

With respect to observational data, the major problem is objectivity. Will two members of a site visit team view, record, and report what was seen and heard in a similar manner? This question suggests the need for multiple members on any visitation team. To further enhance objectivity, all members of a visitation team should be focusing on pre-specified criteria using agreed-upon definitions. In certain SRPs, the observational data are used to confirm the questionnaire data. It should be pointed out that, although such a verification strategy is laudable, its use implies that the questionnaire data may be less than credible.

Data on the outcome criteria are collected either by administrating tests or from permanent records. The validity of standardized tests for individual high schools has been raised earlier, as has the reliability of the data on teacher attendance available in the permanent records. Unfortunately, many developers and users of SRPs tend to assume, rather than establish, sufficient reliability and validity of the data collection instruments used in the programs.

Our major recommendation pertaining to this dimension, is that far more attention be paid to the credibility, objectivity, and validity of the test score data used in SRPs than has been in the past. Without data of sufficient technical quality, the credibility of the entire program is undermined.

Before moving to the fourth and final dimension, the issue of aggregation of data should at least be raised. In actuality, this issue has two parts. First, it is problematic whether a single number should be used to locate or rank a school on a single continum of effectiveness or recognition questionable, where multiple criterior and measures are applied. Second, the

presence of various target populations in the school (e.g., administrators, teachers, parents, and students) and even subpopulations within these target populations (e.g., lower and higher SES students, 3rd and 4th grade students) makes summing data across these populations also a dubious practice (although rather commonplace). Because of the questionnable nature of the practive of aggregation, we suggest that disaggregated data be used.

Decision Making and Decision Makers

Based on the conclusions of the first major section of this paper, and the need to examine data profiles for important school subpopulations (the recommendation of the previous section), the practice of using a single standard to determine which schools should and should not receive recognition awards is strongly discouraged. It is true that the us of pre-set standards for a single criterion greatly simplifies the decision-making process. However, it is clearly impractical in the context of SRPs. Instead, this pristine, sterile standard--which suggests a degree of precision that does not exist--must be replaced with the muddied deliberation of review panels.

However, if such review panels are to make defensible decisions, several issues concerning these panels must be addressed. First, those who hold membership on the panels must be knowledgeable about schools and willing to make difficult decisions. If people with these qualifications, who are also politically acceptable, can be identified, the appointment process should be rather straightforward. Second, criteria to be used in the decision-making process must be communicated to, and understood by, those on the panel. Actual data pertaining to these criteria should be used to assist panel

members in gaining an understanding of the nature of the decisions they are deliberating. Third, and finally, the members of such panels must receive the data related to their decisions in a form in which they can both understand, and associate with the decisions they are expected to make and defend. In an earlier publication, we have attempted to address the problem communicating complex data sets to decision-makers using a relatively simple graphic approach (Mandeville & Anderson, 1985).

It may be overly simple to assert that the quality of the decisions made rests with the quality of the data and the qualifications of those empowered to make the decisions. Nonetheless, we believe this simple statement to be true.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

It would be a happy state of affairs if the title of this paper were "Solutions to the Technical Proglems Inherent in School Recognition Programs." Unfortunately, such a title would be misleading, if not a downright lie. In this paper we have felt compelled to play the part of the devil's advocate and describe in a clear fashion the serious problems which surround the design and implementation of School Reward Programs. Based on our understanding of these problems, however, we have offered a set of recommendations which, if followed, we believe will enhance the future quality of SRPS.

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CRITERIA OF SUCCESS IN SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

Brian Rowan

Increasing, a variety of government agencies and local school districts are developing school recognition programs. Founded on the view that schools differ substantially in performance, and that high performing schools should be rewarded, these programs offer cash awards and/or symbolic forms of recognition to schools that meet various criteria of success. The purposes of such programs are to provide educators with incentives for improving the performance of schools and to increase the attractiveness and holding power of the education professions.

This paper provides a comparative analysis of five school recognition programs represented at a national conference on school recognition programs held in Miami Beach, Florida in March, 1987. Two of these programs were sponsored by state departments of education (California's Distinguished Schools Program, South Carolina's School Incentive Reward Program), one was sponsored by a local school district in cooperation with the local teachers union (Dade County Public Schools/United Teachers of Dade's Quality Instruction Incentives Program),one was sponsored by a state university's College of Education (The University of Illinois at Chicago's For Character Program), and one was sponsored by the federal government (The Secretary of Education's Secondary School Recognition Program).

The purpose of this comparative analysis is to discuss the criteria of success established by the various recognition programs and to show how these criteria reflect underlying theories of school effectiveness. The paper develops a typology that allows programs to be classified according to the

types of criteria used to make awards and it discusses the potential pitfalls associated with implementing different combinations of criteria for school recognition. The paper closes with some considerations about the future development of criteria for school recognition programs.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

School recognition programs can be viewed as one type of organizational control system (for a review, see Lawler, 1976). Like most control systems, school recognition programs measure organizational performance and distribute organizational rewards on the basis of these measurements. When properly designed, recognition programs can function as both information systems that assess current performance relative to organizational standards and as motivational systems that provide incentives for members to meet or surpass organizational standards. Moreover, recognition systems have the potential to improve the quality of work life within organizations and to reduce employee absenteeism and turnover.

In this paper, a typology of control systems developed by organization theorists serves as the conceptual framework for our comparative analysis of school recognition programs (see, Thompson, 1967). A basic premise of this framework is that the criteria established in control systems are a function of two factors: (1) the clarity of organizational goals; and (2) the certainty of the organizational technology used to achieve these goals. Table 1 presents a typology of control systems based on this kind of analysis. What follows is a brief discussion of each of the four "types" of control systems found in the table.

Table 1: Types of Control Systems

	Goals	
	Clear/Chrystallized	Unclear/Unchrystallized
Technology Certain	Routine	Ritual
Technology Uncertain	Judgemental	Inspirational

An initial type of control system occurs in organizations with routine technologies. These organizations have developed clear goals and a technology that is capable of achieving these goals with a high degree of certainty. Certain manufacturing organizations fit the "type." When organizations have well-understood procedures that consistently produce high levels of goal attainment, they evolve control systems that measure the performance of employees or subunits on the basis of both output and process criteria. Measures of outcomes show how well production objectives have been met, while

process measures are used to diagnose potential sources of production difficulties. Thus, these systems achieve a high degree of rationality and tightly control organizational performance.

A second type of organization operates a judgemental technology. This kind of organization has clear goals, but the means to achieving these goals are less well-understood and less certain than in organizations with routine technologies. For example, law firms are oriented to winning cases, but the strategies used by lawyers vary from case to case. When goals are clear but means are variable, organizations develop control systems that are focused more on outcomes than on processes. Outcome criteria are established, and the rewards associated with meeting these criteria motivate members to achieve organizational goals. Process controls, on the other hand, are deliberately left weak, in part because workers need considerable discretion to adapt to changing circumstances.

A third type of organization operates a ritualistic technology. This type of organization has failed to achieve consensus on goals, usually due to "political" disagreements about goals among contending coalitions within the organization. To avoid controversy and maintain their careers within the organization, lower level managers prefer to focus attention on bureaucratic procedure and avoid mention of goals. The result is an organizational control system that focuses on process rather than outcome criteria. In public bureaucracies, this type of control system has been thought to give rise to "bureaupathology", a situation in which employees substitute a slavish devotion to procedure for a sincere concern for service to the organizational mission.

A final type of organization has an inspirational technology. In this type of organization, members pursue a loosely defined and often shifting set of goals, and they have only a partial understanding of the processes that lead to success. Examples of this type of organization include research and development organizations and psychiatric agencies. A number of observers have argued that "cultural" control systems arise in these kinds of organizations. The control and reward systems bear a resemblance to art or literary criticism, and criteria of success are grounded in the personal tastes of evaluators or in idiosyncratic norms embraced by one of a variety of subcultures.

TYPES OF SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS

An analysis of the school recognition programs represented at the Miami conference shows that three of the four "types" of control systems in the typology were present. This section briefly describes these different programs and discusses the theories of educational organization that appear to underlie the development of these programs.

Inspirational Programs

We begin by discussing a type of recognition system that was not represented at the Miami conference. This is the inspirational model. A number of observers have portrayed schools as "loosely coupled systems", that is, organizations with both unclear goals and an uncertain technology. In this perspective, schools exist in a pluralistic environment that forces educators to pursue a shifting and sometimes conflicting set of goals. At the same time, the instructional core of schools is filled with uncertainty:

activities that are successful with one child may fail with another child, and activities that lead to successful results in one context may lead to failure in another. Under these conditions, teachers and administrators operate as inspirational decision-makers whose successes depend on an always shifting and never entirely codified analysis of goals and means.

None of the school recognition programs in Miami appeared to embrace this view of school organization. Indeed, perhaps one purpose or recognition programs is to moderate the inspirational element of school evaluation. Still, it is interesting to consider how an inspirational recognition program might operate in practice. In such a system, inspirational rewards would not be based on measures of organizational outcomes or processes, for there would be far too much uncertainty and thus far too little codification of goals and means for a standardized measurement system to be instituted. Instead, inspirational awards would be made on the basis of shifting and idiosyncratic criteria that reflect the values or tastes of those making the awards.

My experience in schools suggests that inspirational systems are often a baseline from which many schools begin to design other types of reward systems. In this baseline condition, principals and district supervisors often informally and spontaneously recognize teachers on the basis of particular values and tastes. These "cultural" controls are informal and lack codification, and it is easy to criticize them as an irrational basis of control. Nevertheless, these cultural control systems do recognize the sometimes inspirational nature of work in educational institutions. To the extent that employees can understand the implicit basis of rewards in the system, the awards process can help shape school climate and increase

organizational cohesiveness by providing a basis of "cultural" solidarity for members.

Ritual Programs

A second type of reward system, described as the ritualistic model, was represented at the Miami conference. Recall that this type of reward system focuses attention on conformity to well-defined organizational processes but ignores the issue of organizational goal attainment. In school systems, such a control system could easily develop when schools were pluralistic constituencies unable to agree about educational goals. In this kind of environment, it makes some sense for educational administrators to avoid measuring goal attainment, for this can highlight disagreements among the organization's sponsors and lead to increased conflict. Instead it makes more sense to focus attention on the structures and processes developed within schools, especially when these structures and processes are embraced as legitimate by a wide variety of constituencies.

From this perspective, schools consist of a number of ritualistic activities. These activities might include, for example, particular ways of teaching or disciplining students, that are legitimized not on the basis of an analysis of how behaviors bring about desired consequences, but rather in the understanding that "this is the way things should be done around here" or "this is the ways things have always been done." In this situation, measurement of school outcomes is largely avoided. Attention is instead focused on such measures of organizational processes. . . . . .

At the Miami conference, one school recognition program appeared to be of this type: the University of Illinois at Chicago's For Character program. This program measured a number of school processes presumed to be associated with the development of student character, for example, various types of interactions among staff, students and parents, the presence of various student activities in the school (e.g., clubs, organizations, extracurricular program), and the frequency of various awards programs for students. This program did not, however, provide direct measures of student "character" (the outcomes of interest).

Thus, it appears that the For Character program avoided the problem of clearly defining and measuring students' character, one of its important awards criteria. Instead, it focused on activities and processes argued to be related to character development. Given the potential for disagreement over the appropriate character traits that schools should attempt to inculate in students, this makes sense. This program may have adopted the only plausible measurement scheme for its situation. A controversial specification of student character development could be avoided, and the focus of attention instead could be centered around less controversial measures of school processes, for example, the presence or absence of conventional student activities.

Judgemental Programs

Two of the school recognition programs represented at the Miami conference were consistent with a third type of control system, the judgemental model. This model assumes that school goals are reasonably clear,

but that means to achieving these goals are relatively uncertain. For example, in this model, the environment of public schools is reasonably clear about what it wants from schools--basic skills achievement--but there is not a single, clearly defined technology for bringing about this desired outcome. In this view of schooling, educational practitioners operate as judgemental decision-makers. They use a relatively complex set of rules acquired through long personal and professional experience to bring about desired outcomes. In this kind of organization, standardized procedures cannot be used, and employees must exercise considerable discretion. As a result, the reward system holds employees accountable for output performance, but leaves open the choice of means for meeting output criteria.

Two of the recognition programs at the Miami conference were of this type: Miami Dade's Quality Instruction Incentives Program and South Carolina's School Incentive Reward Program. In the South Carolina program, awards are based on criteria for student achievement and student attendance. In the Miami Dade program, awards are based on criteria for student achievement, attendance, and physical fitness. In the South Carolina program, awards are based on criteria for student achievement, attendance, and physical fitness. In the South Carolina program, schools are rewarded on the basis of outcomes in one year and formulate plans for improvement for the next year. In the Miami Dade program, schools formulate plans for meeting the programs' reward criteria. Thus, these programs recognize the professionalism of school personnel and grant educators much discretion in planning and conducting instruction.

Routine Programs

The final type of reward system, the routine model, was represented by two recognition programs at the Miami conference. This type of control system appears to be most compatible with a perspective on schooling found in recent research on effective schools. This theory of education presents educators with a clear set of goals (basic skills achievement) and a simple specification of the instructional practices that foster attainment of these goals. Thus, the effective schools movement embodies the claim that educators not only know what they want, but also have at their disposal a set of techniques that allow them to attain it. From this perspective, education can act as routine decision-makers, uniformly applying procedures prescribed by effective schools theory in order to achieve a clearly defined set of instructional goals. This control system is predicated on an assumption that research has established clear and replicable relationships between certain instructional processes and student achievement and thus that it is appropriate and useful to measure both organizational processes and outcomes.

Two recognition programs at the Miami conference were of this type: California's Distinguished Schools Program and the Secretary of Education's School Recognition Program. These two programs do differ slightly in the specific procedures used to measure instructional outcomes, and there are differences in the specific definitions and procedures used to measure "processes". Nevertheless, there is some convergence in the kinds of criteria established by the assessment instruments. Both programs measure similar dimensions of curriculum, evaluation, administrative leadership, school climate, instruction, and school-community relations, and both programs measure student achievement. Thus, both programs appear to have been shaped

by a belief in the validity of recent effective schools research, and designed to encourage schools to adopt the school processes highlighted by this research as a means to improving student outcomes in schools.

DISCUSSION

The central question is whether one of the "types" of control systems serves as a better model for the development of school recognition programs than the others. My own conclusion is that there is room for many different types of recognition programs. The problem is to design a control system that is consistent with the political and technical circumstances prevailing in today's educational system.

From this perspective, the inspirational model would appear to be an appropriate model for the development of many recognition programs, especially those developed by state and national agencies. Consider, for example, that a large amount of evaluation research, both quantitative and qualitative, supports the notion that means-ends relationships in American education are site-specific. Local schools pursue a wide variety of goals and exercise considerable control over within-school processes. An implication for the sponsors of state and national recognition programs is that local operations are often substantially out of line with standardized criteria. Moreover, research provides little reason to believe that local schools either warmly endorse or easily implement central standards. In fact, a consistent finding from evaluation research is that centrally-defined standards are substantially modified during implementation as local schools adapt central initiatives to local circumstances.

If this analysis is correct, we would expect state and national recognition systems to move away from strict criteria of success and instead make awards based upon idiosyncratic or perhaps subcultural norms. On the surface this hypothesis appears to be untrue: all of the school recognition programs in Miami appear to have rejected the inspirational model of assessment. However, a closer look reveals a number of similarities between the operating school recognition programs and the inspirational model. Consider that all of the school recognition programs at the Miami conference allowed schools considerable discretion in implementing school processes. This was not only true of those that operated according to a judgemental model, but also those operating according to the routine and ritual models. Thus, even, even in those recognition programs that explicitly developed "process" criteria, numerical ratings and summary judgements of school standing were only made after site visits designed to adapt the standardized ratings of written forms to site-specific meanings and intentions. Qualitative descriptions of award-winning schools (presented in program documents) certainly suggest that such a loosening of standards occurred. The documents portray award winning schools as a diverse lot that employed a broad variety of means to pursue diverse ends.

If process criteria for schools are inevitably ambiguous, what are the consequences of making such criteria explicit and standardized? One consequence might be the development of new professional and bureaucratic orthodoxies, a form of ritualism. Consider that the school survey and accreditation movements left educational assessment with a number of orthodox measures of process criteria. e.g., class size, teaching loads, and per-pupil

funding. These measures have proven largely irrelevant to the performance goals of today's accountability movement. And while the latest accountability movement has the potential to define a new set of process criteria, there are potential dangers associated with tightening up the definitions and measures of these new criteria. Schools that are unique and innovative, and which deviate in various ways from standard practice, may slip through the new recognition programs unnoticed. Moreover, the message of such a reward system is clear--it rewards conformity over innovation. Thus, designers of recognition programs face a critical choice: to reward according to a tightly standardized set of process criteria that encourages orthodoxy or to loosely define criteria and to open the recognition process to innovative or novel solutions to educational problems.

Other problems arise with the measurement of outcomes. Criterion-referenced testing does allow educators to define measures of instructional outcomes that are highly sensitive to local instructional goals. However, the application of such measures at the state and national level creates a number of problems. For example, there is little agreement among evaluation researchers about how to rank schools on the basis of outcomes, and the ultimate ranking system appears to involve a conflict of values. Some evaluators favor the use of absolute measures of school performance, such as school test score means. But these standards inevitably bias the results against schools serving low income populations. Such a result makes little sense if the goal of the reward system is to motivate low performing schools.

An alternative procedure for measuring school outcomes, one that takes into account the problem of bias, has been developed. This procedure uses

regression residuals to compare school performance to an "expectancy" band derived from comparison of the school to schools serving similar populations. The problem is that these measures are very unstable over time, in part because they contain large components of random error (Rowan, 1985). In such a system, school recognition can resemble a lottery in which organizations attain effective status, not on the basis of what they actually did, but because performance was measured by an unreliable measurement instrument.

Thus, in the measurement of outcomes, several dilemmas exist: When absolute test score standards are used, standards can be set so high that low-performing schools lose incentive to compete. Of course, standards can be lowered, but then the criteria might be so low as to constitute minimal performance for a large number of schools. Relative standards, such as residual measures or gains scores appear to resolve this problem. But these measures contain large portions of error variance. Thus they can encourage superstitious behavior, if winning schools imitate past processes because they were rewarded, even though the award may have resulted in large part from random error.

All of this suggests that strict standards of recognition may be inappropriate in may situations and that, over time, programs that begin with strict criteria will evolve away from these measures. The dangers of strict standards appear to be strongest with respect to the measurement of school processes. In this domain, few reliable or valid measures exist (Rowan, 1985). A good case can be made that many of the processes endorsed as effective by the programs in Miami obtain their validity, not from the findings of rigorous research, but instead from the norms and values of one

segment of the education community. Do these programs, then, promote a rigid orthodoxy? I think not, in part because the site visits give the system enough leeway to award innovative schools, and in part because the awards given by the programs are not strong enough to motivate ritual conformity. Nevertheless, by developing process standards, the school recognition programs promoted a highly routine theory of schooling.

The development of outcome criteria is less problematic, but several problems still exist. It is possible to develop criterion referenced tests that are sensitive to local instructional goals and to use these both as an assessment tool and as a reward criterion. The problems associated with developing outcome criteria are in many ways easier to solve at local levels, where site-specific performance goals can be set, than at state and national levels, where a diverse group of schools must be compared on a standardized instrument. In these comparisons, schools with local instructional goals that are out of step with the goals of central assessors often find themselves disadvantaged in comparison to conforming schools, even though local goals have been developed that are compatible with local circumstances. Under these conditions, goal displacement can occur; local schools may turn away from site-specific goals to pursue the rewards offered by conformity to central standards. Alternatively, local schools pursuing suitable goals may remain unmotivated by the centralized reward system. In either case, the goals of the reward system--to encourage improvement and to motivate participation--remain unachieved.

CONCLUSION

What, then, is the future for school recognition programs? The analysis developed here suggests that state and national recognition programs should encourage inspirational decision-making in local schools. This does not mean that school recognition programs must be based on narrow connoisuership and rely on unmeasured and implicit criteria of success. The problem at this level of the educational system is to design a recognition program that avoids the twin problems of goal displacement and ritual orthodoxy. One possibility is for state and national recognition programs to allow more decentralization. For example, this kind of system would judge schools on the basis of their ability to meet locally specified goals. The possibilities for local abuse of this system could be restricted by allowing central administrators to negotiate with local representatives over the development of performance criteria. Whatever the process, this kind of system would consist of a diversity of success criteria consistent with the diversity of means/ends relationships in local schools.

This in fact the spirit of the Florida law which gave rise to the Dade County recognition program, and, excerpt for Dade County's use of residuals as outcome measures, this program in my view presents the most viable model for the design of new recognition programs. In this program, the state invites local agencies to develop recognition programs, but leaves to these agencies the problem of developing criteria. At the local level, as in Dade County, a reward system is developed that makes awards on the basis of district-wide instructional goals but leaves the choice of processes to the professional judgement of teachers and administrators. Such a decentralized system would

appear to avoid many of the pitfalls of the ritualistic and mechanistic views of schooling and be capable of promoting innovation at the local school level.

In summary, the analysis demonstrates that the problems confronting designers of school recognition programs are formidable. Nevertheless, the development of viable programs is possible. At state and national levels, such programs recognize the diversity of school goals and the inspirational nature of school organization, thus avoiding the development of strict criteria of success. At the local level, district programs can specify outcomes but recognize the judgemental nature of teaching by leaving the choice of processes to the professional educators at school sites. To the extent that these recognition programs can provide strong incentives for local participation, they would appear to be a potentially powerful avenue for the improvement of local schools.

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SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS: CONTROLLING OR EMPOWERING?

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Recognition programs in education are becoming increasingly popular tools for supporting and fostering the individual and collective achievement of administrators, teachers, and students. However, if the question is, "How can we optimize the productive capacity of the professional staff in our schools and school districts," is the answer, "By adopting and implementing recognition programs - for schools, or teachers, or administrators, or students"? Given the complexities of organizational life, no answer to the question of enhancing productivity is that easy or that simple. The issue for consideration is the range of possible effects of recognition programs on the individuals in our schools. That issue, seemingly simple on the surface, rests at the heart of a deep-seated problem confronted continually by both practitioners and organizational researchers, i.e., the needs, values, and preferences of the individual versus the needs, preferences and values of the organization.

The conflict and tension between the individual and the organization have been commented on and wrestled with through generations of organizational thought. Return, for example, to a period just over fifty years ago:

> We still give much lip serve to the forgotten individual, but the whole complex of thought, except when our immediate personal concerns are involved, relates to the cooperative and social aspects

> of life. We are so engrossed constantly with the problems of organization that we neglect the unit of organization and are quite unaware of our neglect. It almost seems to be our purpose to forget the individual except as he [sic] compels consideration. (Barnard, 1935 in Barnard, 1956, p. 4)

Return also to a period just over twenty--five years ago:

> Many of our attempts to control behavior, far from representing selective adaptations, are in direct violation of human nature. They consist in trying to make people behave as we wish without concern for natural law ... When we fail to achieve the results we desire, we tend to seek the cause everywhere but where it usually lies: in our choice of inappropriate methods of control .... When people respond to managerial decisions in undesired ways, the normal response is to blame them. It is <u>their</u> stupidity, or <u>their</u> uncooperativeness, or their laziness which is seized on as the explanation of what happened, not management's failure to select appropriate means of control. (McGregor, 1960, pp. 9-10)

Contemporary organizational literature is attempting to clarify the types of choices and strategies that separate effect from less effective organizations. Simply stated, those choices are rooted in people - the organization's renewable natural resource. Peters and Waterman (1982, p. 238) summarized the lessons learned from the excellent companies research in terms of the pivotal role of people: "Treat people as adults. Treat them as partners; treat them with dignity; treat them with respect. Treat them ... as the primary source of productivity gains."

Yet, despite its longevity, based on evidence from the organizations in which most of us live and work, this advice is not as simple and commensical to operationalize:

> We all know people who fade away or become "has beens" as a result of being knocked down one too many times in an organization. Or we have seen people's personal needs trampled in the rush to complete an important task, or in the path of an aggressive manager - all in the name of a company goal .... We work in organizations to accomplish specific tasks. People gain a sense of self-esteem from the value that is placed on their skills and the way they help the organization reach its objectives. Indeed, we who are managers would be irresponsible if we did not evaluate carefully others' capabilities to get a job done. But the more we judge people in terms of their usefulness to the organization, the more we may unsuspectingly diminish their humanity. We may treat people solely as a means to an end. Organizations are not set up to treat people as individuals. (Wallace, 1985, p. 10)

Why is it that despite over fifty years of advice and admonitions to pay attention to people is there such confusion in the field? Do recognition programs represent the missing mechanism for fostering individual and organizational effectiveness in schools and school districts? Could they be? The purposes of this paper are:

* To argue that effective recognition programs represent organizational trade-offs in favor of the individual;

* To identify the conditions necessary for recognition programs to maximize human potential.

The Argument

The history of problems in operationalizing a focus on people in organizations should come as no surprise. In fact, the knowledge base in organizational studies is filled with contradictions that create confusion for administrators and other organizational participants. Administrators are regularly and routinely presented with choices that conflict. Each choice can be argued to be good on some grounds. But, some choices are responsive to the needs, values, and preferences of individuals; others are responsive to collective organizational purposes. More importantly, especially indesigning and implementing recognition programs, the choice makes a difference. To support this point, consider the paradoxical choice options imbedded in the organizational literature about:

* Control (retention of critical choice, preference, and judgment activities at the apex of the organization) and its operational counterpart, i.e., Accountability (systematic efforts to ensure individual and group productivity)

AND

* Empowerment (individual autonomy and achievement, choice activity by organizational participants, shared power and rewards) and its operational counterpart, i.e., Efficacy (reinforcement of the creativity, productivity, and commitment of the individual).

Control and accountability. The standard view of control in organizations was expressed by Daft: "A basic assumption underlying organization theory is the need for managers to control the organization" (1986, p. 28). Traditional organizational studies raise questions about control, but do not challenge this basic assumption. Instead, the questions raised relate to types of control (e.g., tight or loose) and mechanisms of control (e.g., evaluation systems, management by objectives). Typically, the answers to control questions are framed in terms of organizational characteristics. For example, organizations of large size, routine technology, infrequent innovation, and certain environments are likely to reflect tight control throughout a centralized, bureaucratic structure employing rational, analytic decision making processes. Loose control is associated with uncertain environments, nonroutine technology, small size, frequent innovation, and trial and error decision making.

Control is usually described at two levels, organizational and individual. Organizational control refers to the activities of top management in setting goals, monitoring productivity, evaluating and providing feedback to subunits. In schools, these activities may take the form of "wall charts" comparing student achievement across schools or school districts or centralized specification of the components of local school improvement plans. Control of individuals involves some output or productivity records and/or direct observations of employees on-the-job. In schools, these activities may take the form of administrative involvement in clinical supervision models or the setting of job targets. The necessity of administrative control at both levels is assumed in traditional organizational studies.

The necessity of administrative control is also assumed in much of the recent literature regarding instructionally effective schools. Strong administrative leadership and the unambiguous selection of school goals presume that tightening control in schools is a necessary feature of school improvement.

Accountability is the operational counterpart of control. Accountability refers specifically to systematic efforts to ensure organizational and individual productivity. At the organizational level, public schools are currently being subjected to a revival of interest in establishing mechanisms to guarantee specific outcomes and to seek out nonproducers. A focus on organizational accountability ultimately turns inward to a focus on individual accountability. Thus, state legislatures and local boards of education are instituting policies that require attainment of specified standards for progress across grades and schools and allow for inter-district and inter-state comparison of educational attainment. The current interest in accountability has become linked to a general commitment of the American people to the importance of individual and institutional competition and responsiveness. Consequently, the efforts to ensure accountability require that some administrators, teachers and students be designated losers; others are designated winners. The popular belief, supported by traditional organizational studies, is that competition creates the conditions necessary to increase organizational and individual productivity. Clearly, accountability is integral to traditional organizational thought.

The building blocks or key components of some recognition programs are grounded in traditional beliefs about control and accountability. Such

programs are argued to enhance organizational effectiveness because they direct the subordinate's attention to the range of goals, values, and preferences cherished by the "organization." Recognition programs become a mechanism to:

* specify conditions and outcomes defined as important by and for the organization;
* direct the attention of employees to those conditions and outcomes;
* provide organizational reinforcement to the individuals who reinforce the organization's preferences and directions.

Note that control is retained at the apex of the organization. Control in this context is not defined narrowly to mean mindless autocracy or heavy-handed centralization. Rather, control includes participatory management and strategic planning. Regardless of the broader definition, administrators establish goals, operationalize their attainment (i.e., design interventions or a plan of implementation), monitor operations, and evaluate outcomes precisely because they assume that in most organizations, most of the time, preferences are well-defined and the technology to attain them is clear.

Recognition programs based on competition are mechanisms of control and accountability. The notion is that "winning the game" is such a powerful intervention that organizational participants will sacrifice their own goals, preferences, and values for those of the organization. The drive to win becomes a subtle form of control and accountability. The rules of the game are clear, measureable, and understood by the players. The few, not the many, are sorted out for reward. Recognition programs based on selectivity increase competition. Selectivity and competition create rewards that seem

unattainable to some, encourage isolation, hinder cooperation, and foster negative staff relationships (Johnson, 1984, p. 16).

Practitioners and theorists have repeatedly challenged the utility of these perspectives, noting the negative consequences of these assumptions and preferences. The alternative proposed in the contemporary organizational literature involves the diffusion of control and the importance of the individual's contribution.

Empowerment and efficacy. Control limits the ability of the organization to act, react, and respond to changing conditions, including new knowledge and proven innovations. Support for the diffusion of control throughout the organization is rooted in two assumptions: (1) that problem solving and innovation are best handled closest to the point of effective action; and (2) that in most organizations, most of the time, preferences are problematic and the technology to attain preferred ends is unclear (Cohen, March, and Olsen, 1982). There is an alternative to controlling, tough-minded management; the alternative recognizes the ambiguity and complexity of organizational life.

> Managers who make decisions might well view that function somewhat less as a process of deduction or a process of political negotiation, and somewhat more as a process of gently upsetting preconceptions of what the organization is doing. (March and Olsen, 1976, p. 80)

Trading-off control presumes that an organization is populated by skilled, committed people, and a directive, interventionist management stance squanders the available human resources. Solutions, ideas, and potential new futures are believed to exist in abundant supply in the expertise, activities,

and ingenuity of organizational members. Managers act in ways that mobilize strengths, increase the capacities of individuals to enhance organizational effectiveness, and entertain alternative, plausible futures.

The strategy to operationalize this facilitative style is empowerment. Kanter (1983) defined empowerment as making organizational power tools more widely accessible to organizational participants. These power tools are:

> Supplies of three "basic commodities" that can be invested in action: information (data, technical knowledge, political intelligence, expertise); resources (funds, material, space, time); and support (endorsing, backing, approval, legitimacy). (Kanter, 1983, p. 159)

The result of doing that is to crease personal autonomy in decisions of preference, choice, and judgment. Kanter (1983) noted that, as control is relaxed, innovative responses by workgroups and individuals will increase. Empowerment encourages innovation everywhere in the organization. Initiative for action and freedom of choice are moved away from the organization's managerial center.

Related to issues of empowerment are strategies for reinforcing the creativity, productivity, and commitment of the individual, i.e., promoting individual efficacy. Good schools and school districts are portrayed in the organizational literature as being populated by confident people who exhibit both personal and institutional efficacy. Employees believe they can successfully complete their own work tasks, are important to the organization, and can influence what happens in the organization. This sense of efficacy translates into pride and commitment to the organization:

> There is emotional and value commitment between person and organization; people feel that they 'belong' to a meaningful entity and can realize cherished values by their contributions. (Kanter, 1983, p. 149)

The relationship between efficacy and effectiveness is argued on several grounds:

1. Shared expectations for success reduce the sense of risk that imedes organizational innovation;
2. A shared sense of personal efficacy translates into a belief that the organization is effective and support the establishment and maintenance of a strong, positive organizational culture;
3. A personal sense of efficacy allows individuals to assume greater responsibility for their own work and reduces the burden of close supervision.

Mechanisms to enhance the individual's sense of efficacy conflict head on with organizational emphases on accountability. Why is there a conflict between a sense of self-effectiveness and organizational efforts to evaluate performance? There is a separate body of evidence which indicates that the assessment of performance by self is slightly off the normal curve:

> In a recent psychological study when a random sample of male adults were asked to rank themselves on "the ability to get along with others," <u>all</u> subjects, 100 percent, put themselves in the top half of the population. Sixty percent rated themselves in the top 10 percent of the population, and a full 25 percent ever so humbly thought they were in the top 1 percent of the population. In a

> parallel finding, 70 percent rated themselves in the top quartile in leadership; only 2 percent felt they were below average as leaders. Finally, in an area in which self-deception should be hard, for most males at least, 60 percent said they were in the top quartile of athletic ability; only 6 percent said they were below average. (Peters and Waterman, 1982, pp. 56-57)

In summarizing the research from business and industry, Lawler (1981) noted that individuals tend to overestimate their own performance and underestimate the performance of others. These differences become a source of dissatisfaction about the evaluation system and the job.

This is the rub. If people are consistently under-evaluated, they can only make sense out of the experience by denying the validity of the evaluation on some grounds, i.e., the criteria, the process, the skill of the evaluator. To the extent that an evaluation system distinguishes clearly among employees on the basis of the contributions of each (i.e., to the extent that it serves the option of accountability), it will fail to increase individual efficacy. An evaluation system can be devised to support efficacy. Under such a system, everyone should be above average and most of those rated should be in the top quartile of the population. This system will, of course, fail to meet the criterion of accountability. From the position of the administrator, the options are in conflict.

The building blocks or key components of some recognition programs are grounded in the alternative beliefs about the importance of empowerment and individual efficacy. Such recognition programs are argued to enhance individual effectiveness because they diffuse control throughout the

organization and increase opportunities for individuals in ways that expand pockets of strength and responsiveness in schools and school districts. Recognition programs become a mechanism to:

* uncover conditions and outcomes defined as important by and for the individuals working at the technical core of the school;
* capitalize on the diverse skills and talents of individuals in responding to short and long-term challenges within the school;
* create primary workgroups of involved and informed individuals to discover and tryout innovative responses to problems confronting the school or school district.

The Choices

Note that a paradox has developed. Administrators are faced with a strategic choice option, i.e., foster control and ensure accountability, or diffuse control and support the ingenuity, creativity, skills, and commitment of individuals. The conflict between the choices is apparent, but the choices are not easy or simple. For example, observers, including Kanter, are disturbed by the consequences of trading-off control:

> Unlimited circulation of power in an organization without focus would mean that no one would ever get anything done beyond a small range of actions that people can carry out by themselves. Besides, the very idea of infinite power circulation sounds to some of us like a system out of control, unguided, in which anybody can start nearly anything. (And probably finish almost nothing.) Thus, the last key to successful management innovation is to see how power

> gets pulled out of circulation and focused long enough to permit project completion. But here we find an organizational dilemma. Some of the focusing conditions are contrary to the circulating conditions, almost by definition. (Kanter, 1983, pp. 171-172)

The dilemma is clear, but Kanter is surely wrong about the solution. The whole notion of empowerment is so frightening to those of us in organizations that even empowerment tools are legitimated by reference to the language of control, e.g., Quality Control Circles. In fact, empowerment and control represent conflictual choice options. Individuals foster one and tolerate the other. The election of which is which influences markedly the nature of the organization.

Does the choice make a difference in the design and implementation of recognition programs? Certainly. Returning to the arguments in the beginning of this paper, administrators cannot continue with impunity to trade-off the individual for some blurred collectivity. Argyris (1971) argued explicitly that "management may have based the make-up of the organizational world on incorrect assumptions about human behavior" (p. 10). The make-up of that organizational world includes control and intervention and accountability. Like most organizations, schools and school districts are filled with mechanisms of control and intervention and accountability. The mechanisms noticeably absent from most organizations, including schools and school districts, are those that provide some means of recognizing the contributions of individuals. Recognition programs built on beliefs about empowerment and individual efficacy fill that void. Such programs provide vehicles for operationalizing advice emerging from contemporary organizational studies abut "productivity through people."

Maximizing Human Potential

The real challenge of leadership is discovering what people do right and communicating that to them regularly and visibly. Concentrating on achievement facilitates achievement. Paying attention to "productivity through people" means:

* Believing that most people in the organization, most of the time, want to do a good job and will, if given a reasonable opportunity;
* Communicating high, but achievable, expectations for performance based on shared commitments;
* Opening opportunities for job and role diversity and promotion to high producers;
* Increasing the opportunities for frequent positive reinforcement from peers and superordinates;
* Increasing the number of celebrations surrounding good performance.

Much of the literature on the utility of various incentive systems for administrators and teachers is applicable to a discussion of the narrower initiative represented by recognition programs. Experience with incentive systems in and outside of education and evidence from research and evaluation of such systems are sufficient to justify a number of generalizations:

* Recognition programs provide a much needed mechanism for acknowledging the good work of good teachers.
* To the extent that they are highly selective, distribute rewards narrowly, and are based on individual competition, recognition programs will increase isolation and decrease collegiality.

* To the extent that they acknowledge diverse activities of a wide range of staff, recognition programs are more likely to foster positive climates.
* Recognition programs are unlikely mechanisms for triggering organizational reform. Rather, they succeed in successful schools.
* Recognition programs are not powerful enough initiatives to directly impact the wide range of staff productivity issues. Comprehensive personnel development systems, of which recognition programs are a part, need to address the variety of concerns surrounding recruitment, retention, and increased productivity of the professional staff of schools and school districts.

Recognition programs most likely to make a difference for the professional staff trade-off control and accountability for empowerment and efficacy. Clark, Lotto, and Astuto (1984, pp. 64-66) noted several characteristics of effective educational organizations based on a synthesis of the school improvement and instructionally effective schools research. The following factors, adapted from that summary, represent an inventory worth considering before developing and implementing recognition programs:

1. Commitment and focus. Good schools and school systems project a raison d'etre. People know what they are doing and what they do well. They are organizations with a sense of themselves. Recognition programs should recognize and build upon this sense of identity in areas or of productivity and excellence.
2. Expectations. In good educational organizations, staff project a high self-efficacy and hold high expectations for themselves and

others in the organization. Teachers believe that they and their colleagues can teach. Teachers expect principals to perform and principals are surprised by evidence of low productivity. Teachers expect administrators to reward productivity and to be productive. Recognition programs should be based on these widely-held beliefs about effectiveness broadly distributed throughout the school.

3. Action. People in good organizations do things. They have a bias for action, a proclivity for success,and a sense of opportunism. Effective organizations promote trial and error. Recognition programs need to move beyond support for present and stable versions of the work of the organization. They need to tolerate trials with plausible new futures.

4. Leadership. Good organizations have leaders spread throughout the organization. Designated leadership positions are held by individuals who are active, committed, and frequently charismatic. But these organizations are also distinguishable because they spawn primary workgroups and individuals who are leaders by example. Recognition programs need to be devised that recognize all the "doers" in the organization.

5. Climate. Successful educational organizations work for all the people in the organization. Certainly they work for students. Equally importantly, they work for teachers and administrators, too. Good schools are good places to live and work for everyone. Recognition programs need to be constructed that support,not conflict with, a positive school climate. Competition in recognition programs

will, of course, reduce collegiality and fight against the development of a positive climate.

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